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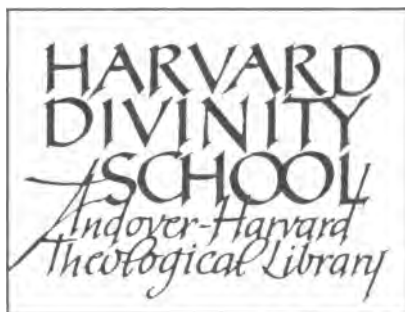
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Dionysius Areopagita, Beiser
= THE CELESTIAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL
HIERARCHY

OF
DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH FROM THE
ORIGINAL GREEK,

BY THE
REV. JOHN PARKER, M.A.,
AUTHOR OF "CHRISTIANITY CHRONOLOGICALLY CONFIRMED,"
"WHY AM I A CHRISTIAN?" ETC.

"Τὸν γὰρ ἐκείνης προαναβήσεων ἢ κατὰ ταύτην τελεσιουργία τὴν ἀλήθειαν
ἐπιστάσατο, καὶ ἔστι τῆς θεολογίας ἡ θεουργία συγκεφαλαιώσις."

—EC. HIER. c. iii. s. 5.

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PARAPHRASE: CEL. & ECC. HIER., DEAN COLET.

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Commentaries.

HUGO OF ST. VICTOR.

JOHN OF SALISBURY.

ROBERT OF LINCOLN.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.

ALBERTUS MAGNUS.

DIONYSIUS CARTHUSIANUS.

Scholia.

DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA.

DARA.

MAXIMUS.

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General References.

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Introduction.

SKETCH OF LIFE.

DIONYSIUS was born¹ in Athens, A.D. 5, nine years after the birth of Jesus Christ. He was educated first at Athens, then at Heliopolis, in Egypt. There, at the age of twenty-five, he witnessed, with Apollophanes, the miraculous darkness² of the sun, which occurred at the time of the Crucifixion, A.D. 30.³ Returned to Athens, he married a woman of noble birth named Damaris, and was elected one of the nine Archons of Athens. Having filled the office of Archon without reproach, he was elected member of the Areopagus, a court of justice consisting of fifty-one citizens of Athens, distinguished for birth, wealth, intelligence, and character. In A.D. 49,⁴ nineteen years after the Crucifixion, and ninth of Claudius, St. Paul was brought before the court of the Areopagus as the setter forth of strange gods, because he was preaching Jesus and the Resurrection. The Court of the Areopagus was the guardian of the religion of Athens, and had condemned Socrates to death, on the ground that, by teaching one God as supreme, he dishonoured the gods of Greece. The Athenians, however, were so much ashamed of their treatment of that great philosopher, that no person afterwards was subjected to the same fate for the same cause. Hence St. Paul escaped. Nor was this all. Dionysius, with other illustrious men, clave unto Paul, and embraced the Christian Faith. The moving cause of his conversion was, that he learned from St. Paul that the darkness which he had observed in Egypt was coeval⁵ with the Crucifixion. He was baptized 3rd October, A.D. 49, in the forty-fourth year of his age. St. Paul soon after left Athens, attended by Dionysius, who was his companion for three years,⁶ during which time he was prepared for the Diaconate, and formed that intimate friendship with Timothy which lasted until death. Dionysius was present with Hierotheus, St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and other Apostles at the funeral rites of the Blessed Virgin, who died at Jerusalem, A.D. 54,⁷ twenty-four years after the Ascension, in the seventy-second year of her age. Dionysius was, in due time, ordained Priest. We do not know the date, but we gather the fact from

¹ Ant. Ed. and Vol. p. 252.

² p. 256 and 7th letter.

³ Dionysius the Areopagite, p. 19, Skeff.

⁴ Acts xviii. 2. ⁵ Letter 7 and 11.

⁶ p. 281.

⁷ p. 293.

his letter to Demophilus, in which he intimates that he had admitted Demophilus to the order of the Therapeutæ. It was the priest's function alone to admit to that order. Dionysius would seem to have been a member of a College¹ of Clergy in Athens, whose duty was to impart instruction to candidates for baptism, to study the higher theology, and to impart² such information as was needed by the Church at large. Dionysius of Corinth says that he took the oversight *τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν*³ of the Parish of Athens. He also wrote letters to individuals who sought explanations of statements contained in his works in circulation. He would appear to have travelled to other centres. He was absent from Athens when Demophilus was guilty of the act of insubordination, which called forth his instructive letter in rebuke. The same letter alludes to his visit to Crete, where he was the guest of Carpus, who afterwards became Bishop of the Troad, 2 Timothy iv. 13. Dionysius was ordained Bishop of Athens by St. Paul, in succession to Hierotheus, who, most probably, accompanied St. Paul in his first journey to Spain.⁴ St. Paul, before his martyrdom, sent for Dionysius to Rome to take charge of the congregations planted by himself in Gaul. Dionysius arrived too late to see the Apostle alive, but Clement confirmed the commission, and Dionysius, with Rusticus, Eleutherius, and others, departed for Gaul. They arrived first at Arles, where Regulus was appointed Bishop, in succession to Trophimus,⁵ who had returned to Asia in consequence of sickness. Dionysius, with his two companions, ultimately established themselves in Lutetia Parisiorum, the emporium of trade between Britain and the Mediterranean. There, as a centre of operations, he remained till A.D. 96, when he returned to Athens for the purpose of meeting St. John after his release from Patmos. St. John and Dionysius met at Ephesus to "speak face to face," and it is probable that the last chapter was then added to St. John's Gospel. The tenth letter of Dionysius clearly implies that St. John's Gospel was then in circulation, and already read by Dionysius. The last chapter was added to correct an impression prevalent in the Church that St. John should not die. Dionysius remained in Asia for two years. Before his return to Gaul St. Timothy died in the reign of Nerva, 97-98—as Polycrates, a writer of the second century, and Bishop of Ephesus, affirms. It is probable that Dionysius revised and completed his works during that time. Upon his return to Gaul, Dionysius presented a copy of the "Divine Names" to Eugenius Marcellus, as to a second Timothy in pious memory of the first.⁶

Through his sanctity, learning, and venerable age, Dionysius

¹ Cel. Hier. 13 c. ad finem.

² See Letters.

³ Eusebius Ec. His. c. xxiii.

⁴ A.D. 59—sixth of Nero.

⁵ 2 Tim. iv. 20.

⁶ Vol. 2, Ant. Ed., p. 431.

acquired a commanding influence in Spain, Germany and Britain (*παρὰ τοῖς ἑσπερίοις μέρεσι*¹). The Druid Priests² made desperate efforts to thwart him. His influence became known in Imperial Rome. Nearly the whole of the last years of the Emperor Trajan³ were spent in the East, for the subjugation of the Parthian and other kingdoms. In A.D. 115, he left Syria for the Parthian expedition. In August, A.D. 117, he died at Selinus in Cilicia, on his return to Rome. Hadrian was proclaimed Emperor at Antioch, 11th August, 117. He at once arranged matters in the East, and arrived at Rome, 118 A.D., where, by concessions to the Senate and gifts to the people, he consolidated his position. In A.D. 119 he began his tour of the provinces, by passing through Gaul, on his way to Britain. He then sent the Prefect of Gaul to allure Dionysius from Christianity to Paganism. In that case, he was to bring him with honour to the Imperial presence. If he failed, he was to cut off his head. Dionysius rejected the Imperial honours, and chose the crown of martyrdom. With his two companions, united in life, and in death not divided, he joyfully sealed his testimony in his own blood, and "migravit ad Christum," 9th October, A.D. 119,⁴ in the seventieth year of his Christian course and in the one hundred and fourteenth of his natural life. The hill on which he suffered is hence called Montmartre. In order to terrorize Dionysius and his companions, Lisbius, the first-fruits of Gaul, with his repentant wife, suffered martyrdom a few days previously. Hence the title, "Premier Baron Chretien," borne by the noble house of Montmorency,⁵ as his representatives, to this day. It is, perhaps, more than a coincidence, that Monseigneur Darboy, Archbishop of Paris, who had written so nobly and so bravely in defence of the writings of Dionysius, and had translated them into French, suffered, as Archbishop, in the same city, if not on the same mount, on 24th May, 1871.

The East, naturally, commemorates the Baptism of Dionysius on the 3rd of October. The West, as naturally, commemorates his martyrdom on the 9th of the same month.

THE WORKS OF DIONYSIUS.

If spurious works, throwing light upon the doctrines and services of the Church in Apostolic times, had been found in an Egyptian tomb, what a stir the discovery would have made! These works

¹ p. 317.

² p. 335-9.

³ Trajan and Hadrian in Smith's Gr. and Roman Biography.

⁴ p. 341.

⁵ L'Histoire de la Maison de Montmorency par M. Desarmeaux, Vol. 1, p. 12. Paris, 1764. Ant. Ed., and Vol., 317.

have been entombed in public libraries the last 150 years—known and read by only a chosen few. They are not spurious, which will detract from their interest with some. Further, they show the New Testament as in circulation and of Divine authority in the first century. That again will destroy their value with those Christian advocates who seek to present the Christian Faith under incredible conditions, and whose logical purpose is to insist at once upon the necessity and the folly of Faith. Others may say they are spurious. We must, however, be faithful to Truth and to glorious “men of old time,” and affirm that they are the genuine works of Dionysius the Areopagite—the convert and faithful disciple of St. Paul. The writings of Dionysius are a collection of letters, written at various intervals, between A.D. 58 and 98. The larger treatises are addressed to Timothy. Dionysius was chief of a college of Preceptors¹ at Athens, whose occupation was the instruction of new converts, and the study of the higher theology. They were taught the deeper mysteries of the Christian Faith by Hierotheus, the first local Bishop² of Athens. Hierotheus wrote several abstract treatises, similar in style to Aristotle’s Ethics, which were too deep and too compressed to be understood by ordinary intellects.³ At the request of Timothy, and by order of Hierotheus, Dionysius wrote the “Divine Names,” in order that he might present the teaching of Hierotheus in a form more easily understood. The letters were begun whilst Dionysius and Timothy were both Presbyters, and the original superscription was retained for the whole treatises. Is not this the case with nearly all the Prophets and with some of St. Paul’s Epistles? When Dionysius writes to St. John, or Polycarp, or Titus, he addresses the former as Theologos—Apostle, Evangelist—the latter as Hierarches, and Gaius as Therapeutes. The appeal to the Episcopal judgment of Timothy, in the ninth chapter of the celestial hierarchy, shows that Timothy had become Bishop when that letter was written. It is worthy of remark that the superscription is not attached to the mystic theology—the last of the works—although it was written to “friend Timothy.” The whole works probably received their finishing touches between 96-98, during the two years that Dionysius spent in Asia, when he met St. John at Ephesus.

¹ Divine Names, c. iii., s. 2.

² The Archbishop of Athens gives me the succession at Athens thus:—1st Hierotheus, A.D. 52; 2nd, Dionysius; 3rd, Narcissus, one of the seventy; 4th, Publius, from 118-124; 5th, Quadratus, who presented Apology to Emperor Hadrian.

³ Divine Names, c. iii., s. 2.

EVIDENCE OF DATE IN WRITINGS.

The works are full of personal allusions. Dionysius affirms that he was converted to the Christian Faith by St. Paul, whose teaching on the holy Angels he transmits. After St. Paul he claims Hierotheus as his chief instructor, whose abstract treatises he tries to make more intelligible, whilst preserving his doctrine with the utmost fidelity. He declares himself to have been present at the funeral rites of the Blessed Virgin, who died in Jerusalem, A.D. 54. He mentions Peter, James, and other Apostles as being present. He reminds Timothy that, after the Apostles, Hierotheus excelled all others in the hymns by which on that occasion he extolled the Divine compassion and condescension as manifested in the Incarnation. He writes to St. John when exiled in Patmos; to Titus when Bishop of Crete; to Polycarp when Bishop of Smyrna. He alludes to Gaius and Carpus, both mentioned in the New Testament. He mentions the philosopher Clemens—either Clemens Atrius, to whom the younger Pliny addressed two of his letters, or Clemens, Bishop of Rome. He writes at a time when the Psalms were yet read in Hebrew whenever a person competent to do so was present. He describes the Chants as sung by the whole Choir. The Antiphonal singing was introduced by St. Ignatius at Antioch, and became universal by the time of Constantine. He writes at a time when the threefold Ministry and Sacrament was the accepted order of the Church, and before the sevenfold view became dominant at the end of the second century. He speaks of persecutions and martyrdoms, and of Apostolic Sees, as already occupied by successors of the Apostles. Apollonphanes wrote a *letter*¹ abusing Dionysius as a "turncoat," who used the Greek learning against the Greek Philosophy. Dionysius replies that Polycarp should remind Apollonphanes that he had witnessed with himself the miraculous darkness in Egypt, which he had discovered to be coeval with the Crucifixion. The works are Attic in phraseology, and teem with technical terms of Athenian law. They abound in newly coined words, expressing with marvellous precision in the language of Plato and Aristotle the newly revealed Christian truths. To appropriate the perfect description of Bishop Westcott, "they² present the thoughts of one who lived in an age of transition, and strove to save from the wreck of ancient philosophy truths which he seemed to find coherent with the Christian Faith." Whilst gladly acknowledging the truth in Greek philosophy, he

¹ The origin of that letter was no doubt the conversion of Statonice, the wife of Apollonphanes, on account of which St. Paul was cast into chains at Philippi. The bearers of the letter from the Church at Corinth, complaining of the false teachers, found St. Paul in chains at Philippi. Correspondence of St. Paul, Carrière et S. Berger, page 20. Fischbacher, Paris.

² Religious Thought in the West, p. 189.

corrects its errors by teaching that "the universe was created, not by any subordinate or rival power, but by an act of love of the One Infinite God, and that evil therefore is not inherent in matter, but due to the will of responsible creatures. He maintains that God is imminent in the world, and separate, though not alien from it. That the world was originally and essentially good." Further, the "Ecclesiastical¹ Hierarchy" was written when the Bishop was Celebrant, and completed every other Sacrament by the administration of the Holy Communion; but when the celebration was beginning to be committed to the Priest—when the Bishop officiated at funerals, and decided, by his own authority, whether the departed had lived and died in such a manner as to justify the use and to be benefitted by the rites of Christian burial—when the Bishop alone consecrated the holy oil—when the names of those who had previously been buried were recited at a funeral,² which soon ceased to be practicable—Dionysius wrote at a time when the term *Episcopus*³ was not yet applied to the Bishop. He uses the word *Hierarches*, head of the hierarchy, for Bishop, *Hiereus* for Priest, *Leitourgos* for Deacon. Dionysius regards the laborious search after truth, by means of intellectual study, as only an inferior method, and much lower in degree than that by which, detaching ourselves from everything earthly, we lie passive in the presence of God, and, without mental effort, receive the divine communication of light as our spiritual condition will permit in ever increasing degree as we advance more and more towards oneness with God. Prayer is better with him than reading, and repose under the circumambient glory of God is better than all. Everything false or evil places a barrier to the passage of the Divine Light, which will not enter until the "strong man armed" is cast out, and the allegiance to God becomes entire. Such is the teaching of Dionysius, who writes throughout with the freedom and fearlessness of conscious truth.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

First Century.—St. Luke records the conversion at Athens of certain illustrious men, and singles out one of them by name—Dionysius the Areopagite. He thus marks Dionysius as pre-eminently distinguished. Hierotheus was probably one of those illustrious men. He was an Areopagite, like Dionysius. As Dionysius was sent to Gaul, so Hierotheus was sent to Spain. He settled permanently in Segovia, A.D. 69.⁴ If then, Hierotheus

¹ Ecc. Hier., c. v., s. 5, c. vi., *Mysterion*. ² Ecc. Hier., c. vii., *Mysterion*.

³ *Episcopus* applies to external government—*Hierarches* to spiritual administration.

⁴ Halloix *Life of Hierotheus*.

were one of the "illustrious" men from whom Dionysius is distinguished by name, there must have been some reason for such distinction. The treatise on the "Divine Names" was written about A.D. 58. The ninth chapter of the "Celestial Hierarchy" was written when Timothy was already a Bishop. The Acts of the Apostles terminates with St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, A.D. 65. Those treatises, therefore must have been known to St. Paul and to St. Luke, before A.D. 65. From the letters preserved, asking the meaning of certain phrases in the writings of Dionysius, we know that his works were extensively circulated. I submit, then, that the reason which led St. Luke to distinguish Dionysius the Areopagite by name, was not merely his noble birth,¹ deep learning, and exalted position, but also the value of the works being written by him—worthy, like those of Hierotheus, to be considered as only second, after the Apostles, because they contained Apostolic teaching. Literary criticism may fairly infer a presumptive proof that Dionysius at least wrote *some* celebrated works. Plato was described by Numenius, a Pythagorean philosopher, as "Moses speaking Attic Greek." If we find Dionysius writing Christian truths in Attic Greek, it is only what we might reasonably expect.

Second Century.—Ignatius² in his letter to the Trallians, enumerates some of the deep mysteries of the Christian Faith, respecting the holy angels, the extent of the ages, the pre-eminence of the Cherubin and Seraphin, the exaltation of the Spirit, the Kingdom of the Lord, and the incomparable nature of the all-powerful God. He not only quotes the very words found in Dionysius, but shows a thorough acquaintance with his works. In the "Celestial Hierarchy," and in the "Divine Names," the mysteries spoken of by Ignatius are exhaustively described and explained. What Ignatius merely alludes to, Dionysius writes a treatise upon in the sixth chapter of the Celestial Hierarchy and twelfth of Divine Names. We must therefore conclude that Ignatius quotes from Dionysius, whose works were therefore in circulation in the early part of the second century.

Third Century.—Anastasius of Antioch³ and Maximus⁴ the martyr, both affirm that Dionysius, the famous Bishop of Alexandria, wrote scholia upon the works of Dionysius the Areopagite. Maximus, in his commentary on the fifth chapter of the "Celestial Hierarchy," when speaking upon the word *εὐσείας*, as applied in that chapter to the holy Angels, says, "The great Dionysius, the Bishop of Alexandria, who had been a rhetorician, in the scholia which he made upon the blessed Dionysius, his

¹ Dionysius was descended from that Ionian Prince who first planted the vine—in Zante—and taught the use of wine. Hence the name Dionysius.—DOUBLET.

² Read Ant. Ed., 2 Vol., 390-6 and p. 450.

³ p. 452.

⁴ 1 Vol., p. 70.

namesake, thus speaks. "The external philosophy was accustomed to call all invisible nature, uncreated, and the personalities, beings—*ἀγεννητον πᾶσαν ἀόρητον φύσιν, ὁμοίως καὶ οὐσίας τὰς ὑποστάσεις*—and hence says that expressions of this kind are used by the holy Dionysius inappropriately *καταχρηστικῶς*, after the manner of the external philosophers"—the Greeks. Maximus is writing a commentary upon Dionysius the Areopagite. He alludes to a word in the text. He says that Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, in commenting upon the use of that word in the text, affirms that the divine Dionysius uses that word in the sense of the Greek philosophers, and not quite exactly. Maximus further proves that the Dionysius of Alexandria was the Bishop of the third century, by describing him as having been a rhetorician—the characteristic¹ of the Bishop of Alexandria, who was a pupil of Origen.

Fourth Century.—The first Council of Nicea² directs that in the reception of a lapsed person, the prayer of Dionysius the Areopagite should be used. That prayer is alluded to in the last chapter of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy. The Fathers of Nicea, therefore, regarded Dionysius the Areopagite as an ecclesiastical authority, and, as so well known, that it was not regarded as necessary to give the prayer in full. In the same century Dara, a learned Syrian theologian, wrote a commentary upon the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite. The Syrian was one of the most learned portions of the Church. Volumes of most rare theological learning in Syriac lie entombed in our libraries.

Fifth Century.—Photius,³ Patriarch of Constantinople, describes a book, written by Theodore (400), in which he answers the difficulties raised by some against the genuineness of the works of Dionysius. Photius regarded the objections as inconclusive. In speaking of the synodical epistle of St. Sophronius, he says, "There were found collected the testimony of Ancient Fathers, Leo . . . and Dionysius, disciple of St. Paul, martyr of Christ, and Bishop of Athens, great in expression, but greater still in thought."

Sixth Century.—In the sixth century Gregory⁴ the Great not only quotes Dionysius in a manner which shows the most intimate acquaintance with his works, but speaks of him thus: "Dionysius the Areopagite, the ancient and venerable father." Gregory's writings so breathe the spirit of Dionysius, that some, in their desire to attribute the works to any author but their own, have foolishly suggested that Gregory the Great might have written them, and through humility have attributed them to Dionysius the Areopagite. Gregory would at least have enjoyed the joke.

¹ Smith's Greek and Roman Biography.

² Ant. Ed. 2 Vol., p. 461.

³ p. 395.

⁴ p. 462.

Seventh Century.—The second Council of Nicea¹ quotes the very words of Dionysius, as those of ὁ μέγας Διονύσιος, and says “that the divinely transmitted oracles are the very essence of our hierarchy, *i.e.*, in the true science and knowledge of things divine.” “οὐσία γὰρ τῆς καὶ ἡμᾶς ἱεραρχίας ἐστὶ τὰ θεοπαράδοτα Λόγια.” Ec. Hier. c. i., s. 4.

Eighth Century.—The one man, whose opinion upon the works of Dionysius is entitled to the greatest consideration and confidence, is St. John Damascene.² The most learned of the Greek ecclesiastical writers, he has left, amongst other numerous works, an Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, gathered from the writers of previous centuries, in whom none was more versed. He regards Dionysius as first and best of all. He quotes frequently his very words, and considers his authority as only second to that of the Apostles. St. Thomas Aquinas made known to the west the treasures of theological learning contained in St. John Damascene, and speaks of the works with the same confidence as those of Dionysius the Areopagite, the convert and faithful disciple of St. Paul. It must suffice to say that Maximus and Pachymera wrote Scholia, which remain to this day as a testimony of their belief in the genuineness and value of Dionysius. Five Greek Fathers wrote lives and martyrdoms of the Areopagite. Time and space would fail to tell of St. Ephrem and Constantine the Philosopher, John of Salisbury and Robert of Lincoln, Peter Lombard and Alexandre de Hales, Guillaume de Paris and Vincent de Beauvais, St. Anselm and Albert le Grand, Bernard de Clairvaux and Scotus Erigena, Bonaventura and Gerson, Denis le Chartreux and Thomas a Kempis, Dean Colet and Fabure d'Étapes, Milton and Dante, Bessarion and Budæus, Darboy and Pusey, Dom Pitra and Dulac—all of whom have either written commentaries upon, or translated, or reproduced the doctrine of this Apostolic man.

But has there been no discordant note to mar the celestial harmony of this illustrious testimony? Oh dear, yes! The middle³ Age proclaimed its wisdom by its repudiation of Origen. This modern time displays its advance in learning by its ignorance of Dionysius. Here are some of the elevating names which have been rescued from oblivion by their crude objections to the genuineness of the writings of Dionysius:—Grocinus, Scultetus, Scaliger, Baumgarten, Morinus, Daillé. These are the distinguished names under cover of which modern scholars repose with so much confidence, that they complacently regard, as ignorant of the early centuries one whose temerity permits him to affirm in the nineteenth century, that the writings of Dionysius are genuine.

¹ p. 46r. ² p. 457. ³ Bishop Westcott's Religious Thought in the West, p. 223.

Grocinus¹ thought the works were not genuine, but with the instinct of a scholar carefully avoided giving any reason in proof by which the value of his groceries might be tested.

Scultetus² thought that because certain rites and ceremonies in the administration of the Sacraments are described in order that their spiritual meaning may be explained, the works must have been written later than the Areopagite. Scultetus, in spite of his refined knowledge of the Gospel, overlooked the fact that during forty days our Saviour instructed the Apostles in the things concerning the Kingdom of God; that St. Paul set in order the Divine Service in the Churches visited by him, and that he quotes from an existing Liturgy in one of his Epistles.³ Dionysius occupies about six pages in describing the rites and ceremonies of the Holy Communion, Baptism, and Chrism. Scultetus thought such rites and ceremonies implied an undue exaltation of Sacraments instituted by Christ Himself. St. Paul said to his converts, "By one Spirit were ye all baptized into one body;" "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink of this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death until He do come." Baptism and the Lord's Supper would doubtless not have held a position so exalted in the Gospel according to St. Scultetus.

Scaliger.—Scaliger was a very exalted Episcopalian—when it served his purpose. Unlike some Episcopalians, he deemed the dignity of the Episcopate its most essential feature, and a theological virtue to be the most jealously guarded. Scaliger, therefore, could not believe that Dionysius the Areopagite, an older man, and his chief instructor, would address Timothy under the endearing name of *παῖς*—"my son." St. Paul, it is true, tells Timothy to "let no man despise his youth," and to hold his own. St. Paul sends Timothy, but entreats Titus. But to suppose that Dionysius, who armed Timothy against the Greek philosophers of Ephesus, should address a brother presbyter and a future Bishop as "My son," shewed a familiarity and affection unbecoming the dignity of the Episcopal order. Daillé could be very hard upon the Acephaloi, and Scaliger could be very Episcopalian, when it served their purpose against the truth.

Baumgarten.—The pupils of the Baumgarten Academy were taught that Dionysius was a Pagan, who ennobled the Christian religion by introducing the secret doctrines of the Eleusinian mysteries. Dionysius speaks of himself⁴ as being brought, by his conversion to the Christian religion, from darkness to light. In the logic of the Baumgarten Academy, the conclusion would appear to have been not necessarily contained in the premise.

¹ Ant. Ed. 2 Vol., p. 405.

² Ant. Ed., 2 Vol., p. 405.

³ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

⁴ Ecc. Hier., c. iii., part 1.

Morinus.—Morinus¹ first proves the works written in Asia. Then by ridiculous assumptions he pretends to prove that they were written in Gaul. Then, as initiating the new criticism and as proof of critical acumen he triumphantly asks why, then, were they not written in Latin and not in Greek. He indicates his youthful education by not knowing that all early Christian literature was in Greek, that Arles was the centre of Greek trade before it became a Roman colony, and that the Druids² used Greek as their hieroglyphic language.

Daillé.—"O, that mine enemy would write a book," was the despairing aspiration of Job, in the midst of his affliction. Dionysius, however, in spite of his martyrdom, was more fortunate in this respect. Daillé³ obtained for himself the characteristic of those "who rush in, where angels fear to tread." He has the proud distinction of being the only man in Christendom who wrote a book⁴ to prove that the writings of Dionysius and Ignatius were unknown to early Christendom, and therefore spurious. He produces sixty-six so-called arguments (unhappily not 666), "*id que ultimum*," as he says, to show that the Ignatian Epistles were unknown to any early Father or Historian of the Church. Given the assumption that every evidence to the contrary is either a forgery or a fraud, and it is easily done. Bishop Lightfoot, however, after a *more mature* examination, demonstrated the futility of his method, with regard to the Ignatian Epistles, by proving them to be the genuine writings of the Bishop and Martyr, in spite of the sixty-six⁵ statements to the contrary, whose very number, like an army in confusion, becomes a source of weakness. His method with regard to Dionysius is the same, or even worse, than his treatment of Ignatius. He modestly only produces 42 against Dionysius. Here is an example. To establish the assumed position that the writings of Dionysius were unknown before A.D. 532, he must deny the assertion of the learned Anastatius, and the martyr Maximus, that Dionysius, the famous Bishop⁶ of Alexandria, wrote scholia upon them, about A.D. 250. Maximus, for the purpose of affirming with greater accuracy that the Dionysius who wrote the scholia was the famous Bishop of Alexandria, describes him as having been a rhetorician. That description corresponds exactly with the account given of him in Smith's Greek and Roman Biography.

St. Augustine had been pretty much the same, as also Justin Martyr and Ambrose of Milan. Daillé was a bitter Presbyterian, but he affects so much consideration for the dignity of the

¹ Gallia Christiana, Tom. 7, p. 12. ² Ant. Ed., 2 Vol., p. 337-8.

³ Daillé tried to discredit the letter of Polycarp which Jerome refused to translate lest he should destroy its beauty.

⁴ Geneva, 1666. ⁵ De Scriptis D. et Ign., lib. 2, c. 31. ⁶ Caput 8, lib. 1.

Episcopal office, that he cannot bring himself to believe that one holding the exalted position of Bishop of Alexandria could have been described as a rhetorician. Maximus merely says he had been a rhetorician before his consecration. Daillé, having denied that Dionysius Bishop of Alexandria wrote the scholia, was bound to find some rhetorician of the name of Dionysius to whom the scholia on the Areopagite might be attributed. But such a man, he confesses, cannot be found, except as he said in the imagination of Maximus and Pachymera—he should have said except in the imagination of Daillé. Having fabricated himself this imaginary rhetorician, he imputes fraud to Maximus the Martyr, and to the learned Pachymera by affirming that they attributed the scholia of this unknown man to the exalted Bishop of Alexandria, in order that they might magnify their Dionysius the Areopagite. That was a famous saying of Tennyson, "We always impute ourselves." Another specimen of the 42—"id que ultimum"—statements of Daillé against Dionysius must suffice. "Ex duobus disce omnes." A Conference¹ was held at Constantinople in A.D. 532, between Asiatic and African Divines, to appease the controversies then disturbing the Church on the hypostatic union, or one personality of Christ. The Athanasian Creed describes that personality as "one altogether," "not two." It is a union in person, and not an alliance of two personalities. The Council of Chalcedon declares that out of two whole and perfect natures there is one Christ. It was a deep mystery. Each side witnessed to a phase of truth, and each side was liable to lean towards error—Nestorianism or Monophysitism. The African Divines naturally quoted the phrase from Dionysius *θεωδωρικὴν ἐνέργειαν* as proving the one Christ. Hypatius, who perhaps leaned to that Nestorian party which had corrupted² the text of Chalcedon, being unable to resist the force of the expression, suggested that the works might have been corrupted. They even waxed so bold as to affirm that the works were unknown to Cyril, and were therefore probably spurious. They were informed that Cyril, in his book against Theodorus, had spoken highly of the works. They wished to see the book. They were informed that it was in the library at Alexandria, but that the African Divines had not thought it necessary to bring with them a book so well known. There were at most five persons of the Hypatian party which Daillé calls "the Catholic party." From these premises Daillé draws the triumphant conclusion that the works of Dionysius were repudiated by the whole *Catholic body*.

Fortunately for truth, but unfortunately for Daillé, a Greek and Latin Council was held at the Lateran, A.D. 660,³ to defeat the

¹ Daillé, lib. i., c. 8.

² De Fide et Symbolo, p. 27, Heurtley.

³ Ant. Ed., 2 Vol., p. 462.

attempt of Cyrus to change *καὶ* into *μία* in the letter of Dionysius to Gaius. The works were produced from the Vatican Library, and the original text examined, and the true reading pronounced to be *καὶ*. There was not a word said against the genuineness of the works, which were assumed as beyond question the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite. So trustworthy is Daillé in saying that the writings attributed to Dionysius were repudiated by the whole *Catholic body*.

Laurentius Valla¹ says that many learned men in his day thought the works might have been written by Apollinaris the heretic. It would be impossible to find a more precise refutation of the heresy of Apollinaris than in the writings of Dionysius. Erasmus repudiated the opinion of Valla, and said that he did not believe that the works were written by Apollinaris or any other heretic. Erasmus said that some learned men thought the works were written by another Dionysius, but when challenged to produce the names of such learned men, he could only instance Valla and Grocinius. He was also careful not to say who the other Dionysius was. Erasmus apologized for the evident fraud if the works were not written by Dionysius the Areopagite by saying that "pious people were accustomed to commit forgery for the glory of God." It was a lamentable characteristic of that as of this age, that such idiotic blasphemy could be uttered without blighting the most illustrious reputation. Dupin² and Tillemont³ would seem to have followed without serious examination such reasoning as I have indicated. Such is the blind following of error in this century, that all reasonable men are said to regard the writings of Dionysius as spurious. I cannot deny the fact, but I appeal to all rational men to decide whether that fact reflects credit upon the good sense and learning of the modern West.

For myself, grateful to Almighty God for the clear vision of the truth conveyed to my mind by these priceless works, I thankfully present them to the English people in my native tongue. They present the Christian Faith and the Christian Service as they existed in the first century, and before the Church was torn by schism, and its faith soiled by controversy. They show how an ideal Christianity may be realized in fact. They present the truth which men blindly grope after, under the name of evolution, kenosis, theosophy, and ritualism. They shew the true Atonement as that by which we become at one in ourselves, by becoming one with God. They show the canonical Scriptures in circulation in the first century, and therefore as written by those whose name they bear. As with the Bible, so with Dionysius, the best evidence of genuineness is in the works themselves, devoutly read and

¹ p. 405. ² Nouvelle Bibliotheque des Auteurs Ec., p. cxi., Note. Paris, 1688.

³ Tom. 2, p. 236.

intelligently understood. No ecclesiastical writer knows his own mind so well, or expresses that mind so clearly, as Dionysius. No man states an objection so unflinchingly, or accepts the whole Bible so thoroughly as he. No man is so ready to admit that there are some things to be honoured by silence, as being beyond the mind of man to conceive. No man realized, or expressed so clearly, the mutual coherence of the Old and New Testament as he. ¹ ἡ μὲν εἶφη τὰς ἐσομένας Ἰησοῦ θεουργίας, ἡ δὲ ἐτέλεσε contains a volume of theology. No man shews such unfailing charity towards those who oppose themselves to the truth, or to himself. No one so clearly presents the Church of Christ, the City of God, as a reflection of the divine order in God. Everything is a Trinity with him. Order is God's first law. Goodness is the cause and origin of all things, and the mainstay of their continued existence. Evil is the failure to attain some fancied good—a falling from our first estate. Without some good ² in itself, nothing could continue to exist.

THANKS BE TO GOD.

¹ Ecc. Hier., c. iii., s. 5.


² Republic, lib. i, ad finem.

CELESTIAL HIERARCHY.

CAPUT I.

TO MY FELLOW PRESBYTER TIMOTHY.
DIONYSIUS THE PRESBYTER.

That every divine illumination, whilst going forth lovingly to the objects of its forethought under various forms, remains simplex. Nor is this all. It also unifies the things illuminated.

“VERY good gift¹ and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights.”

Further also, every procession of illuminating light proceeding from the Father, whilst visiting us as a gift of goodness, restores us again as an unifying power to a higher spiritual condition, and turns us to the oneness of our conducting Father, and to a deifying simplicity. For² all things are from Him, and to Him, as said the Sacred Word. Invoking then Jesus, the Paternal Light, the Real, the True, “which light-eth³ every man that cometh into the world,” “through⁴ Whom we have access to the Father,” Source of Light, let us aspire, as far as is permissible, to the illuminations handed down by our fathers in the most sacred oracles, and let us gaze as we may upon the Hierarchies of the heavenly minds manifested in them symbolically for our instruction. And when we have received, with an unearthly and unflinching mental vision, the gift of Light, primal and superprimal, from the supremely divine Father, which manifests to us the blessed Hierarchies of the Angels in types and symbols, let us then, from this gift of Light, be restored again to its unique splendour.⁵ For this *never* loses its own inherent unity, but multiplied and going forth, as becomes its goodness, to educate and unite the objects of its care, it remains firmly and solitarily centred within itself in its unmoved sameness; and elevates, according to their capacity, those who aspire to itself, and makes them one after the example of its own unifying Oneness. For it is not possible that the Divine Ray should otherwise illuminate us, except so far as it is enveloped, for the purpose of sacred instruction, in variegated veils, and arranged naturally and appropriately, for such as we are, by paternal forethought.

¹ James i. 17.

² Rom. xi. 36.

³ John i. 9.

⁴ Rom. v. 2.

⁵ Plato Rep. 6, 7-11, 121-126. Read Allegory of Cave.

Wherefore, the sacred institution which fixed the Holy Rites transmitted to us our most Holy Hierarchy, having deemed it worthy of a celestial imitation of the Heavenly Hierarchies, and depicted the aforesaid immaterial Hierarchies in material figures and bodily forms, in order that we might be borne, as far as our capacity permits, from the sacred pictures to the mystical meaning and likenesses without symbol and without type. For it is not possible for our mind to be raised to that immaterial representation and contemplation of the Heavenly Hierarchies, without using the material guidance suitable to itself, by counting the visible¹ beauties as reflections of the invisible comeliness; and the sweet² odours of the senses as emblems of the spiritual bounties; and the material³ light, as a likeness of the gift of the immaterial enlightenment; and the explicit sacred instructions,⁴—of the feast of contemplation within the mind; and the ranks⁵ of the orders here—of the harmonious and regulated habit, with regard to Divine things; and the reception of the most Divine Eucharist—of the partaking⁶ of Jesus, and whatever other things may be transmitted to heavenly Beings supernaturally, but to us symbolically.

For the sake, then, of this our deification, according to our capacity, the first institution of sacred mysteries, out of its love for man, whilst manifesting the Heavenly Hierarchies to us, and constituting our Hierarchy as fellow-ministers with them, through an imitation of their Godlike priestliness,⁷ so far as in us lies, described under sensible figures the celestial minds, in the inspired descriptions of the oracles, in order that he might lead us through the sensible to the spiritual, and from sacred symbols to the simple sublimities of the Heavenly Hierarchies.

CAPUT II.

That Divine and Heavenly things are appropriately represented, even through dissimilar symbols.

It is necessary then, as I think, first to set forth what is the scope of every Hierarchy, and what benefit each confers upon its followers. Next, to celebrate the Heavenly Hierarchies according to their description in the oracles. Then, following these oracles, to say in what sacred forms the divine descriptions of the oracles depict the celestial orders, and to what kind of naked truth we must be carried through the representations; in order that we

¹ Ps. xix.

² Num. xv. 3.

³ Luke ii. 9.

⁴ John vii. 14.

⁵ Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

⁶ 1 Cor. x. 16.

⁷ 1 Pet. ii. 9.

may not, like the vulgar, irreverently think that the heavenly and Godlike minds are a kind of four-footed¹ and many-faced² creatures, or moulded to the brutish form of oxen,³ or the savage form of lions,⁴ and fashioned like the hooked beaks of eagles,⁵ or the feathery down of birds,⁶ and should imagine that there are a certain kind of wheels⁷ of fire above the heaven, or material thrones⁸ upon which the Godhead may recline, or certain many-coloured⁹ horses, and leaders of the host bearing spears,¹⁰ and whatever else the oracles declare to us under multifarious symbols for our instruction.

And indeed, the Word of God, artlessly, makes use of many poetic representations of sacred things, out of regard to our intelligence, so to speak, consulting a mode of education proper and natural to it, and moulding its instructive descriptions with reference to it.

But if anyone think well to accept the sacred compositions on the ground that things uncompound are unknown in their own nature, and cannot be seen, but thinks the imagery of the holy minds in the oracles is incongruous, and all this is, so to speak, a rude scenic representation of angelic names; and if he further says that the theologians when they have come to the bodily representation of creatures altogether without body, ought to represent and display them by appropriate and as far as possible cognate forms taken from the most honoured and immaterial, at any rate, and exalted beings, and ought not to clothe the heavenly and Godlike simple essences with the many forms of the lowest creatures to be found on the earth (for this, too, would perhaps be more adapted to our instruction, and would not degrade the celestial explanations to incongruous dissimilitudes), but this other both does violence to the Divine powers without authority, and likewise leads astray our minds through dwelling upon these irreverent descriptions. And perhaps he will also think that the heavenly places are filled with certain herds of lions, and troops of horses, and bellowing songs of praise, and flocks of birds, and other living creatures, and material and less honourable things, and whatever else the similitudes of the oracles in every respect dissimilar, describe, for a so-called explanation, but which verge towards the absurd, and pernicious, and impassioned. Now, in my opinion, the investigation of the truth demonstrates the most sacred wisdom of the oracles, in the descriptions of the heavenly minds, taking forethought, as that wisdom does, wholly for each, so as neither, as one may say, to do violence to the Divine powers, nor at the same time to enthrall us in the grovelling

¹ Ezek. i. 7.² Ezek. i. 6.³ Ezek. i. 10.⁴ Ibid.⁵ Ibid.⁶ Ezek. i. 6-8.⁷ Dan. vii. 9.⁸ Ibid.⁹ Zech. i. 8.¹⁰ Joshua v. 13, 14; 2 Macc. iii. 25.

passions of the debased imagery. For anyone might say that the cause why forms are naturally attributed to the formless, and shapes to the shapeless, is not alone our capacity, which is unable immediately to elevate itself to the intellectual contemplations, and needs appropriate and cognate instructions which present images suitable to us of the formless and supernatural objects of contemplation; but further, that it is most agreeable to the revealing oracles to conceal, through unutterable and sacred enigmas, and to keep the holy and secret truth respecting the celestial minds inaccessible to the multitude. For it is not every one that is holy, nor, as the oracles affirm, does knowledge belong to all.¹ But if anyone blame the descriptions as being incongruous, and says it is shameful to attribute shapes so repugnant to the Godlike and most holy Orders, it is enough to reply that the method of the Divine manifestation is twofold—one, indeed, as is natural, representing through likenesses that are similar, and of a sacred character, but the other, through anomalous shapes, fashioning them into entire unlikeness and incongruity. No doubt, the mystical teaching of the revealing oracles sometimes describes the august blessedness of the super-substantial Deity as word² and mind³ and Being,⁴ manifesting its God-becoming reason and wisdom, and as really being existence, and true cause of the existence of all things. They also describe it as light.⁵ While such sacred descriptions are more reverent, and seem in a certain way to be superior to the material images, they yet, even thus, in reality fall short of the divinely supreme similitude. For it is above all being and life. No light, indeed, expresses its character, but every description and mind incomparably falls short of its similitude.

But at other times its praises are divinely sung by the oracles themselves, through dissimilar descriptions, when they affirm that it is invisible⁶ and infinite⁷ and incomprehensible⁸; and when there is made known, not what it is, but what it is not. For this, as I think, is more appropriate to it, since, as the secret and Hierarchical tradition used to teach, we rightly describe its non-relationship to things created, but we do not know its super-substantial, and inconceivable, and unutterable indefinability. If, then, the negations respecting things Divine are true, but the affirmations are inappropriate, the explanation as regards things invisible, through dissimilar descriptions, is more appropriate to the hidden mystery of things unutterable. Thus the sacred descriptions of the oracles honour, and do not expose to shame, the celestial Orders, when they make them known by dissimilar pictorial forms, and demonstrate through these their supernatural

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 7. ² John i. 1. ³ Ps. cxxxvi. 5. ⁴ Ex. iii. 14. ⁵ John i. 4.

⁶ 1 Tim. vi. 16. ⁷ Ps. cxlv. 13. ⁸ Rom. xi. 33; Jer. li. 15.

superiority to all material things. But I do not suppose that any sensible man will gainsay that the dissimilar representations elevate our mind rather than the similar, for there is a likelihood, with regard to the more sublime representations of heavenly things, that we should be led astray so as to think that the celestial Beings are a certain sort of creatures with the appearance of gold, and a sort of men with the appearance of light,¹ and glittering like lightning,² handsome³ clothed in bright shining raiment, shedding forth innocuous flame, and so with regard to all the other shapes and appropriate forms with which the Word of God has depicted the celestial minds.

In order that men might not suffer from this by thinking they are nothing more exalted than their beautiful appearance, the elevating wisdom of the pious theologians reverently conducts to the misrepresenting dissimilarities, not permitting our earthly part to rest fixed in the base images, but urging the upward tendency of the soul, and goading it by the unseemliness of the symbols. For it is neither lawful, nor has it the appearance of truth, even to the most earthy conceptions, that the most heavenly and Divine objects of our contemplation are actually like things so base. Above all, this must particularly be borne in mind, that not even one of the things existing is altogether deprived of participation in the beautiful, since, as is evident and the truth of the oracles affirms, all things are very beautiful.⁴ It is, then, possible to frame in one's mind, good contemplations from everything, and to depict from things material the aforesaid dissimilar similitudes, both for the intelligible and the intelligent; since the intelligent hold in another fashion, things which are attributed to creatures of sense otherwise. For instance, anger in the irrational creatures takes its rise in the passions, and their movement which takes the form of anger is full of all kinds of unreasonableness. But with regard to the intelligent, we must think of the angry impulse in another fashion, as denoting, according to my judgment, their masculine reasonableness, and the determined persistence in their Godlike and unchangeable steadfastness. In like manner we say, with regard to the irrational creatures, that lust is a sort of un-circumspect and earthy passionate attachment, arising incontinently from an innate movement, or intimacy in things subject to change, and the supremacy of the bodily impulse, which drives the whole organism towards the object of sensual desire. But when we attribute lust to spiritual beings, by clothing them with dissimilar similitudes, we must think that this is a craving for the immaterial above expression and thought, and the inflexible and determined longing for the supernally pure and passionless contemplation, and for the perpetual and spiritual fellowship in that pure and most

¹ Acts i. 10.² Matt. xxviii. 3.³ Acts vi. 15.⁴ Gen. i. 31.

exalted glory, and the abiding and beautifying comeliness. And the incontinence we may take for the persistent and inflexible craving which nothing can repulse, on account of the pure and changeless love for the Divine beauty, and the whole tendency towards the really desirable. With regard to the irrational living beings, or soulless matter, we appropriately call their irrationality and want of sensibility a deprivation of reason and sensibility. With regard to the immaterial and spiritual beings, we rightly acknowledge their superiority, as celestial beings, over our transitive and bodily speech; and the earthly perception, which is alien to the incorporeal minds. It is, then, permissible to depict forms which are not appropriate to the celestial Beings, even from portions of matter which are the least honourable, since even matter itself had its beginning from the Essential Beauty. And throughout the whole range of matter there are some echoes of the spiritual comeliness. And it is also possible through these to be led to the immaterial archetypes—the similitudes being taken, as has been said, in a different manner, and the same similitudes being defined, not in the same way, but harmoniously, and appropriately, as respects the peculiar natures of the spiritual and sensible beings. Under such descriptions as these, we shall find the mystic theologians depicting in their sacred sketches, not only the celestial Orders, but sometimes also the Godhead itself.

At one time, indeed, they celebrate the Godhead under exalted imagery, as Sun¹ of Righteousness, as Morning² Star rising divinely in the mind, and as Light³ shedding spiritual splendour so that it cannot be hid. At other times through ordinary phenomena, as Fire,⁴ shedding its innocuous light; as Water,⁵ furnishing a fulness of life, and, to speak symbolically, flowing into a body, and bubbling forth rivers which flow with an irresistible force. At other times from things of the lowest type, as sweet-smelling Myrrh,⁶ as Head Corner-stone.⁷ But they also clothe it in forms of wild beasts, and attach to it the properties of a Lion,⁸ and Panther,⁹ and say that it shall be a Leopard,¹⁰ and a rushing Bear.¹¹ But, I will also add, that which seems to be more dishonourable than all, and the most to misrepresent. Distinguished theologians have shewn it to us as representing itself under the form of a worm.¹² Thus do all the godly wise, who are interpreters of the secret inspiration, separate the most holy of all things from the uninitiated and the unholy, to keep them undefiled, and prefer the dissimilar descriptions so that Divine things should not be easily reached by the profane, and that those who diligently contemplate the Divine imagery should

¹ Mal. iv. 2. ² Num. xxiv. 17; 2 Pet. i. 19. ³ John i. 5. ⁴ Ex. iii. 2.

⁵ John vii. 38. ⁶ Cant. i. 2. ⁷ Eph. ii. 20. ⁸ Hosea xiii. 8. ⁹ Hosea xiii. 7.

¹⁰ Hosea xiii. 8. ¹¹ Hosea xiii. 8. ¹² Ps. xxii. 6.

not rest in the types as though they were true. And so Divine things are honoured by negations which teach the truth, and by comparisons with the lowest things which are diverse from their proper representation. For the reasons assigned, there is nothing absurd if they depict even the celestial Beings under dissimilar similitudes which misrepresent them. For perhaps not even we should have come to an investigation, through an accurate inquiry into Divine things (from its difficulty, no doubt, but also for instruction), unless the deformity of the descriptions representing the Angels had shocked us, not permitting us to linger in the discordant representations, but rousing us utterly to reject the earthly proclivities, and accustoming us to elevate ourselves through things that are seen to their celestial meanings. Let these things suffice to have been said respecting the material and incongruous descriptions of the holy Angels in the Holy Scriptures. But next, it is necessary to define what we think the Hierarchy is in itself, and what benefit those who possess a Hierarchy derive from the same. But let Christ lead the discourse, if it be permitted to me to say—He Who is mine, the Inspiration of all Hierarchical teaching. But thou, my son, after the pious rule of our Hierarchical tradition, do thou religiously listen to things religiously uttered, becoming inspired through instruction in inspired things; and when thou hast enfolded the Divine things in the secret recesses of thy mind, guard them closely from the profane multitude as being uniform, for it is not permitted, as the oracles say, to cast to swine the unsullied and bright and beautifying comeliness of the spiritual pearls.

CAPUT III.

What is Hierarchy? and what the use of Hierarchy?

Hierarchy is, in my judgment, a sacred order and science and energy—assimilated, as far as permissible, to the likeness of God, and conducted to the illuminations granted to itself from God, in due order, with a view to the Divine imitation. Now the Divine attractiveness, as being uncompounded, as good, as source of initiation, is altogether free from any dissimilarity. But it imparts its own proper light to each according to their fitness, and perfects in most Divine initiation in proportion to the unvarying likeness of those who are being initiated into harmony with itself. The scope, then, of Hierarchy is the assimilation and oneness with God, holding Him as the Leader of all religious science and energy, looking unflinchingly to His most Divine comeliness, and moulding itself as far as possible, and perfecting its own

followers as Divine images, as mirrors luminous and without flaw, receptive of the primal light and the Divine ray, and devoutly filled with the radiance committed to itself, but, on the other hand, spreading this radiance ungrudgingly to those after it, in accordance with the Divinely-fixed regulations. For it is not permitted to the initiators in Divine things, nor to those who are being religiously initiated, to practise anything whatever beyond the sacred regulations of their own function. Nor even must they attempt otherwise, if they desire to attain its deifying splendour, and if they regard it in a religious light, and mould themselves after the example of each of the holy minds. He, then, who mentions Hierarchy describes a certain, altogether Holy Order, an image of the Divine Beauty, which performs the mysteries of its own illumination in due order and with religious science, derived from the Hierarchy and which is assimilated to its own proper author as far as permissible.

For each of those who have been called into the Hierarchy find their perfection in being carried to the Divine initiation¹ in their own proper degree; and, what is more Divine than all, as the oracles say, in becoming a fellow-worker² with God, and in shewing the Divine energy dwelling in itself, manifested as far as possible to others. For it is an Hierarchical regulation that some are purified and that others purify³; that some are enlightened and others enlighten⁴; that some are perfected and others perfect. So that each one will accomplish the Divine imitation in his own several manner. The Divine Blessedness, then, to speak after the manner of men, is unstained by any dissimilarity,⁵ but is filled with invisible light⁶—perfect,⁷ and needing no perfection; cleansing, illuminating and perfecting. Yea, rather it is a holy purification and illumination and perfection—above purification, above light, pre-eminently perfect, self-perfection, and cause of every Hierarchy, but elevated pre-eminently above every holy thing. It is necessary then—as I think that those who are being purified should be entirely perfected, so as to be without stain—that those who are being illuminated should be filled with the Divine Light, conducted to the habit and faculty of contemplation in all purity of mind; that those who are being initiated should be separated from the profane, and become recipients of that science which makes perfect the holy men who are initiated into the highest mysteries.

Further, that those who purify should impart from their own abundance of purity their own proper holiness; that those who illuminate, as being luminous intelligences, whose function it is to receive and to impart light, and who are joyfully filled with

¹ Eph. v. 1. ² 1 Cor. iii. 9. ³ Ps. li. 9. ⁴ Ps. cxix. 18.

⁵ Deut. vi. 4. ⁶ John xii. 46. ⁷ Matt. v. 48.

holy gladness, that these should impart, in proportion to their own overflowing light, to those who are worthy of enlightenment. But that those who make perfect, as being skilled in the impartation of perfection, should perfect those who are being initiated, through the holy instruction, in the science of holy men who have been initiated in the higher mysteries. Thus each rank of the Hierarchical Order is led in its own degree to the Divine co-operation by performing, through grace and God-given power, those mysteries which are essentially and super-essentially in the Godhead, and are accomplished by It supernaturally, and are manifested to us through our Hierarchy for its imitation of the God-loving minds¹ to the highest permissible extent.

CAPUT IV.

What is meant by the appellation "Angel"?

Now that the nature of the Hierarchy has been, in my judgment, sufficiently defined, we must next celebrate the angelic Hierarchy, and we must contemplate with celestial vision its sacred descriptions contained in the oracles, in order that we may be borne aloft through the mystic representations to their most Godlike simplicity, and may celebrate the Author of all Hierarchical science, with God-becoming reverence and with thanksgivings to the origin of mysteries. First of all, however, let this truth be spoken—that it was through goodness that the superessential Godhead, having fixed the essence of created things, brought them into being. For this is the peculiar characteristic of the cause of all things, and of goodness surpassing all, to call created things to participation in itself, as each order of existences was determined from its own analogy. For all created beings that exist share in a Providence, bubbling forth from the super-substantial Godhead, Creator of all things. For they would not be, unless they had participated in the essence and origin of things created. All things then, without life, participate in it, by their existence. For the Being of all things is the Godhead, which is above all Being. Things with life participate in the life-giving power which is itself above all life. Things rational and intellectual participate in the self-perfect and pre-eminently perfect wisdom which is above all reason and mind. It is evident, then, that all those Beings dwell around Him, who have participated in Him, in many forms. The holy ranks, then, of the heavenly Beings, share in the participation of the Divine gifts in a higher

¹ The Holy Angels.

degree than things which merely exist, or which lead an irrational life, or which are rational like ourselves. For by moulding themselves intellectually to the Divine imitation, and looking from the earthly to the Divine likeness, and striving to mould their own spiritual likeness after its example, they naturally have more ungrudging communications with it, being near and ever moving upwards, as far as permissible; they elevate themselves with the intensity of the Divine unswerving love, and receive the primal illuminations without earthly stain and by moulding themselves to these, their whole life becomes spiritual. These, then, are they who, at first hand, and under many forms, participate in the Divine, and, at first hand, and under many forms, make known the hidden mysteries of the Godhead. Wherefore, beyond all, they are deemed pre-eminently worthy of the angelic appellation on the ground that the Divine illumination comes to them at first hand, and through them there pass to us manifestations above our capacities.

Thus, then, the Law, as the Word of God affirms, was given to us through the ministration of Angels¹; and Angels led our illustrious fathers² before the Law, and after the Law to the Deity. Either by leading³ them to what was to be done, and separating them from error and an unholy life to the straight way of truth,⁴ or by making known to them sacred ordinances,⁵ or hidden visions of celestial mysteries,⁶ or certain Divine predictions through the Prophets.⁷ But if anyone should say that Divine manifestations were made directly and immediately to some holy men,⁸ let him learn, and that distinctly, from the most holy oracles, that no one hath seen, nor ever shall see, the hidden nature of God as it is in itself.⁹ But Divine manifestations were made to those holy men as befits revelations of God, that is to say, through certain holy visions adapted to those who saw them. Now the Word of God, in the fulness of its wisdom, for the instruction of those who are contemplating the Divine, naturally names "Divine manifestation," that special vision which manifests that Divine image, depicted in itself, as clothing in form things without form. As though a Divine illumination were made through this to the spectators, and the godly persons themselves receive some religious initiation. But our illustrious fathers were instructed in these Divine visions, through the mediation of the heavenly powers. Does not the teaching given to us in the oracles describe the holy legislation of the Law, given to Moses, as coming straight from God, in order that it may teach us this truth, that it is a type of a Divine and holy economy. But the Word of God, in its

¹ Gal. iii. 18. ² Acts vii. 53. ³ Gen. xxii. 12. ⁴ Acts x. 3. ⁵ Dan. vii. 16.

⁶ Dan. vii. 10. ⁷ 2 Cor. xii. 2. ⁸ Matt. ii. 13.

⁹ John i. 18; 1 John iv. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 16.

wisdom, teaches this also—that it came to us by the mediation of Angels. As though the Divine regulation were laying down this rule, that through the first, the second are brought to God. For not only with regard to the superior and inferior minds, but even amongst those who are of the same rank, this Law has been established by the supreme Law-giver—that within each Hierarchy there are first and middle, and last ranks and powers. And that the more Divine are the instructors and conductors of the inferior, to the Divine access, and illumination, and participation. But I observe that Angels first revealed the Divine mystery of the love of Jesus towards man, since through them the gift of knowledge passed to us. Thus for example, the most Divine Gabriel instructed Zachariah,¹ the High Priest, that the son who was to be born by Divine grace, from him, beyond hope, should be a prophet, of the ² God-incarnate work of our Jesus to be manifested to the world for its salvation, as becomes the Divine goodness. But he revealed to Mary,³ how, in her, should take place the Divinely-originated mystery of the unutterable God-formation. Yet another Angel instructed Joseph⁴ how in very truth were fulfilled the things Divinely promised to his ancestor David. Another announced to the shepherds,⁵ as being purified by their separation from the multitude and their quiet life, and with him a multitude of the heavenly host, announced to those on earth that often sung doxology. Let us then ascend to the highest manifestations of light contained in the oracles, for I perceive that even Jesus⁶ Himself, the supersubstantial cause of the highest heavenly Beings, after He had come to our condition without change in Himself, did not overstep the good order which becomes mankind, which Himself arranged and took, but readily subjected Himself to the dispositions of the Father and God, through Angels, and through their mediation was announced to Joseph the departure of the Son to⁷ Egypt, which had been arranged by the Father, and again the return to Judæa⁸ from Egypt. We see Him further, subjecting Himself to the Father's decrees. But I forbear to speak, as addressing one who knows the teaching of our hierarchical tradition concerning the Angel⁹ who strengthened Jesus Himself; or that even Jesus Himself, when He had come to manifest the good work of our salvation, was called Angel¹⁰ of Great Counsel. For, as He Himself says, after the manner of an Angel, "Whatsoever He heard from the Father, He declared to us."¹¹

¹ Luke i. 11-20.² ἀνδρικῆς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ θεουργίας.³ Luke i. 26-38.⁴ Matt. i. 20-23.⁵ Luke ii. 8-14.⁶ Phil. ii. 6-8.⁷ Matt. ii. 13.⁸ Matt. ii. 19, 20.⁹ Luke xxii. 43.¹⁰ Isa. ix. 6.¹¹ John xv. 15.

CAPUT V.

For what reason all the heavenly Beings are called by the common names of Angels.

This, then, in our judgment, is the reason for the angelic appellation given in the oracles. We must now enquire for what reason the theologians call all¹ the heavenly Beings together "Angels;" but when they come to a more accurate description of the celestial orders, they name exclusively as angelic order that which completes the full tale of the Divine and heavenly hosts. Before this, however, they range as superior the Orders of Archangels and the Principalities, Authorities, and Powers, and all the Orders that the revealing tradition of the oracles recognize as their superior.² Now, we affirm that throughout every sacred order the superior ranks possess the illuminations and powers of the subordinates, but the lowest orders have not the same powers as those who are above them. The theologians, then, call the most holy ranks of the highest Beings "Angels," for even they make known Divine illumination. But there is no reason to call the lowest order of the celestial minds Principalities, or Thrones, or Seraphin. For this order does not possess the highest powers, but, as it were, by its own proper function conducts our inspired Hierarchs to the splendour of the Godhead known to itself. Thus, then, the saintly powers of the Beings above this act as conductors towards the Divine of that order which completes the angelic Hierarchies. Perhaps some may say this also, that all the angelic appellations are common in so far as all the celestial powers possess, in a less or a greater degree, a fellowship in the likeness of God and in the gift of light from God. But, in order that the question may be thoroughly investigated, let us reverently examine the saintly characteristics assigned to each celestial order in the oracles.

CAPUT VI.

Which is the first Order of the celestial Beings? which the middle? and which the last?

How many, and of what sort are the Orders of the supercelestial Beings, and how the Hierarchies are initiated amongst themselves, I affirm the Divine Author of their initiation alone distinctly knows. Further, that they know their own proper powers and illuminations,

¹ Ps. ciii. 20; Matt. xxv. 31.

² Isa. vi. 2.

and their sacred and supermundane regularity. For it is impossible that we should know the mysteries of the supercelestial minds and their most holy perfections unless, someone might say, so far as the Godhead has revealed to us through them who know perfectly their own condition. We, then, will utter nothing as from ourselves, but whatever angelic visions have been gazed upon by the holy Prophets of God, we, as interpreting these, will set forth as best we can. The Word of God has designated the whole nine celestial Beings by appellations which shew their functions. These our Divine Initiator divides into three three-fold orders. He also says that the first is that order which tradition declares to be always around God, and united closely and immediately to Him before all the rest. For he says that the teaching of the holy oracles declares that the Most Holy Thrones and the many-eyed¹ and many-winged² ranks named in the Hebrew tongue Cherubin³ and Seraphin⁴ are established immediately around God, with a nearness superior to all. This threefold order, then, our illustrious Guide affirmed to be one, and of equal rank, and really first, than which there is not another more God-like or immediately nearer to the earliest illuminations of the Godhead. But he says that the second is that which is composed of the Authorities, and Lordships, and Powers; and the third, as being the lowest of the celestial Hierarchies, is the Order of the Angels and Archangels and Principalities.

CAPUT VII.

Concerning the Seraphin and Cherubin and Thrones, and concerning their Hierarchy, which is first.

We, whilst admitting this as the arrangement of the Hierarchies, affirm that every appellation of the celestial minds denotes the Godlike characteristic of each; and those who know Hebrew affirm that the holy designation of the Seraphin denotes that they are fiery or burning; but that of Cherubin, a fulness of knowledge and stream of wisdom. Naturally, then, the first of the heavenly Hierarchies is ministered⁵ by the most exalted Beings, holding, as it does, a rank which is higher than all, by the fact that it is established immediately around God, and that the first-wrought Divine manifestations and perfections pass earlier to it, as being nearest. They are called, then, Burning and Thrones and Stream of Wisdom—by a name which explains their Godlike dispositions. The appellation of Seraphin plainly teaches their ever moving

¹ Ezek. i. 18.² Ezek. i. 6.³ Ezek. x.⁴ Isaiah vi. 2.⁵ *ἰεραποψύχται.*

around things Divine, and constancy, and warmth, and keenness, and the seething of that persistent, indomitable, and inflexible perpetual motion, and that vigorous transformation of the subordinate, by precept and example, as giving new life and rekindling them to the same heat ; and purifying through fire and burnt offering, and the light-like and light-shedding characteristic which can never be concealed or consumed, and remains always the same, which destroys and dispels every kind of obscure darkness. But the appellation of the Cherubin denotes their knowledge and their vision of God, and their readiness to receive the highest gift of light, and their power of contemplating the Divine comeliness in its first revealed power, and their being filled with the impartation which maketh wise, and their ungrudging communication to those next to them by pouring forth the wisdom given to themselves. The appellation of the most exalted and pre-eminent Thrones denotes their manifest exaltation above every grovelling inferiority, and their celestial tendency towards higher things ; and their unswerving separation from all remoteness ; and their invariable and firmly-fixed settlement around the veritable Highest, with the whole force of their powers ; and their capacity for receiving the approaches of the Godhead, through the absence of all passion and earthly tendency, and their bearing God ; and the ardent expansion of themselves for the Divine receptions. This, then, is the explanation of their names, so far as we can give it ; but we ought to say what we think their Hierarchy is. For I suppose we have sufficiently shown above that the purpose of every Hierarchy is an unswerving devotion to the imitation of the Divine Likeness, and that every Hierarchical function is set apart for the sacred reception and distribution of an undefiled purification, and Divine Light and perfecting science.

But now I pray that I may speak worthily of the most exalted minds—how their Hierarchy is exhibited through the oracles.

One must consider, then, that the Hierarchy belongs properly, and is in every respect like, to the first Beings, who are established after the Godhead, who gave them Being, and who are marshalled, as it were, in its very vestibule, who surpass every unseen and seen created power. Now, so far as they are pure, we must regard them, not as though they have been freed from unholy stains and blemishes, nor as though they were unreceptive of earthly fancies, but as far exalted above all stain of inferiority and every transient holiness in accordance with the highest degree of purity—established above the most Godlike powers, and clinging unflinchingly to their own self-moved and same-moved order in their invariable love of God, conscious in no respect whatever of any declivity to a worse condition, but having the invariable fixity of their own godlike identity—never liable to fall, and always unmoved.

Again, so far as they are contemplative, we must not regard them as contemplating sensible signs intellectually, nor as being led to the Divine by the varied texture of holy representations written for our meditation, but as being filled with all kinds of unearthly knowledge of higher light, and satiated, as permissible, with the beautifying and princely beauty superessential and thrice manifested. Thus, deemed worthy of Communion with Jesus, they do not stamp the deifying similitude in the bodily forms of divinely-pictured images, but as being in very truth near to Him in first enjoyment of the knowledge of His deifying illuminations. Further, because the imitation of God is given to them in the highest possible degree, they participate, so far as possible, in His God-wrought and philanthropic virtues, in the power of a first manifestation. But, so far as they are perfected, we must not think of them as being illuminated with a sacred subtlety according to analytic science, but as being filled with a first and pre-eminent deification, as following from the most exalted science of the Divine operations which Angels can possibly possess. For, not through other holy Beings, but from the very Godhead, are they directed in spiritual things, by their elevation to Itself immediately, by their power, and order, and rank surpassing all. They are both planted near the All-Holy without any shadow of turning, and are conducted for contemplation to the unearthly, immaterial, and spiritual comeliness as far as possible, and to the reasons which make known the Divine operations, and as being first around God they are instructed from the source of mystery itself, and supremely directed in Divine mysteries. This, then, the theologians distinctly shew that the subordinate Orders of the heavenly Beings are taught by the superior, in due order, the deifying sciences, and that those who are higher than all are illuminated from the Godhead itself, as far as permissible, in revelations of the Divine mysteries. For they introduce some of them as being religiously instructed by those of a higher rank, that He, Who was raised to Heaven¹ as befits man, is the Lord of the heavenly Powers and King of Glory. Others, as putting the question to Jesus Himself, and as desiring to learn exactly the nature of His Divine work on our behalf, and Jesus, as instructing them directly, and shewing to them at first hand the work of His goodness out of love to man. "For I, He says, am pondering over righteousness and judgment of Salvation."² Now I am astonished that even the first of the Beings in Heaven, and so far above all others, should reverently strive after the Divine illuminations, as though they were intermediate Beings. For they do not ask directly, "Wherefore are Thy garments red?"³ but they first raise the difficulty among

¹ Psalm xxiv. 7-10.² Isaiah lxiii. 1.³ Isaiah lxiii. 2.

themselves, thus shewing that they desire to learn, and crave the deifying knowledge, but not impeding the Divine illumination given to them after a Divine procedure.

The first Hierarchy, then, of the heavenly minds is purified, and enlightened, and perfected by being religiously directed by the Author of initiation Himself, by its elevation to Himself immediately, and by being filled, according to its degree, with the most holy purification of the unapproachable Light of the most perfect source of initiation, and being unstained by any inferiority and full of primal Light, and perfected by its participation in first-given knowledge and science. But to sum up, I may say this, not inappropriately, that the reception of Divine Science is both purification, and enlightenment, and perfecting—purifying, as it were, from ignorance, by the knowledge of the more perfect revelations imparted to it according to its fitness, but enlightening by the self-same Divine knowledge, through which it also purifies that order which did not before contemplate the things which are now made manifest through the higher illumination; and perfecting further, by the self-same Light the abiding science of the mysteries made clearly manifest. This, then, according to my most accurate knowledge, is the first rank of the heavenly Beings which encircle and stand immediately around God, and without symbol, and without interruption, dances around His eternal knowledge in the most exalted and ever-moving stability; viewing with pure eyes many and blessed contemplations, but illuminated with unique and immediate splendours; filled with a Divine nourishment—numerous indeed in its first-given profusion, but one in the unvariegated and unifying oneness of the Divine Food. It is thus deemed worthy of much participation and co-operation with God, by the assimilation to Him, as far as possible, in excellent habits and energies. They thus know many Divine things pre-eminently, and participate in Divine science and knowledge to the utmost. Wherefore the Word of God has transmitted their hymns to those on earth, in which are Divinely shewn the excellency of its most exalted illumination. For some of them, to speak after the manner of men, proclaim as the “voice of many waters,” “Blessed is the glory of the Lord, from His place.”¹ But others cry aloud that frequent and most august word of God, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth,” “The whole earth is full of His glory.”² These most excellent hymnologies of the super-celestial minds, we have already unfolded to the best of our ability in the Treatise concerning the Divine hymns, and have spoken sufficiently concerning them in that Treatise, from which, by way of remembrance, it is enough to produce so much as is necessary to our present purpose, namely, “That the first Order, having

¹ Ezek. iii. 12.

² Isaiah vi. 3.

been instructed in theological science from the Divine Goodness itself, as a Hierarchy reflecting that Goodness, transmitted it to the Order next after itself." To speak briefly, it teaches this—"That the august Godhead—itsself both above praise. and all praiseworthy—is rightly eulogised by the minds who receive God, so far as He is permitted to be known and sung. For they, according to the oracles,¹ as images of God, are the Divine places of the Divine repose.² Yea further, they affirm that He is alone, and One of three-fold subsistence,³ sending forth His most kindly forethought to all created things, from the supercelestial minds to the lowest of the earth; as Prince above principality and cause of all creation, and grasping all things supernaturally in His resistless embrace.

CAPUT VIII.

Concerning Lordships and Powers and Authorities, and concerning their middle Hierarchy.

Let us now pass to the middle order of the heavenly minds, gazing as far as we may, with celestial vision, upon those Lordships and the truly terrible visions of the Divine Authorities and Powers. For each appellation of the minds above us denotes those characteristics by which they Divinely imitate the Divine Likeness. I think, then, that the explanatory name of the Holy Lordships denotes a certain unslavish tendency to higher things, free from all grovelling subserviency, which does not submit in any way whatever to one single imperious force dissimilar to itself, as befits the freedom of unbending Lordship; superior to every kind of cringing slavery, indomitable to every lower tendency, and elevated above every dissimilarity, ever seeking the true Lordship, and source of Lordship; and moulding as an image of goodness, itself and those after it, to His Lordly Likeness, turning itself wholly to none of the things that vainly seem, but to the Lordly Being, and ever sharing in the Lordly Likeness of God. The appellation of the Holy Powers denotes the possession to the highest possible extent of a certain masculine and unflinching manliness towards all those Godlike energies within themselves—not feebly weak, for the reception of any of the Divine illuminations vouchsafed to it—vigorously conducting itself to the Divine imitation; not forsaking the Godlike movement through its own cowardice, but unflinchingly looking to the superessential and powerful making Power; and becoming an image of this, as far as is permissible, in the likeness of His power, and powerfully

¹ Isaiah lxvi. 1.² Acts vii. 49.³ Heb. i. 3.

turning itself to this as Source of Power, but issuing forth to those next in degree, in its gift of Power and in its likeness to God. But the appellation of the Holy Authorities denotes their being of the same rank as the Divine Lordships and Powers, their beautiful and unconfused good order with regard to the Divine receptions, and the marshalling of the celestial and spiritual Authority, not using their authoritative powers imperiously for base purposes, but conducting themselves in the highest possible degree towards Divine things in due order, and conducting those after them benignly; and being assimilated, as far as permissible to the Authority giving Source of Authority, and making this visible, as is possible to Angels, in the well-ordered regulations of the Authority giving power. The middle order of the heavenly minds, having these Godlike characteristics, is purified and illuminated in the manner described, through the Divine illuminations vouchsafed to it at second hand, which pass through the first Hierarchical Order, and through this middle as a secondary manifestation. Without dwelling upon that message, which is said to pass through one angel to another, let us take it as a symbol of a message delivered from afar, and obscured in its passage so as to become a secondary revelation. For, as men skilled in our initiation say, the knowledge of Divine things, manifested directly to ourselves, is more perfect than the Divine contemplations imparted through others. Thus, I think, with regard to the angelic ranks, the immediate participation in knowledge of those elevated to the nearest proximity to God, is more clear than that of those who are initiated through the instrumentality of others. Wherefore, by our sacerdotal tradition, the first minds are named, perfecting, illuminating, and purifying Powers, of the subordinate on the ground that these are conducted through them to the superessential Origin of all things; and are placed in possession, as far as is permissible to them, of the consecrating purifications, and illuminations, and perfections. For this is absolutely fixed by the Divinely-established law of consecration, that through the first, the second should partake of the Divine illuminations. This you will find declared by the theologians in many ways. For when the Divine and Paternal Love towards man had chastened in a remarkable manner, His people Israel, with a view to their spiritual salvation, and had delivered them to terrible and savage nations for correction, by every kind of providential training to better things, He both liberated them from their misery, and led them back, through His compassion, to their former state of comfort. Then, one of the theologians, Zechariah, saw in a vision one of the first Angels, as I think, around God (for the name of Angels is common, as I said, to them all), who learned from God Himself the comforting words, as we say, concerning this matter. But he saw another Angel, of

inferior rank, advancing to meet the first Angel, for the purpose of receiving and explaining an illumination. Then, from him, instructed as from a Hierarch, and charged to reveal to the theologian, that Jerusalem should be abundantly occupied by a multitude of people.¹ But another theologian, Ezekiel, says that this was righteously ordained by the glorious Godhead itself, exalted above the Cherubin.² For the Paternal Love towards man, whilst conducting Israel through an education to better things, by a righteousness worthy of God, decided to separate the guilty from the guiltless. This is revealed to one first after the Cherubin³—He who was bound about the loins with a sapphire,⁴ and wore displayed the hierarchical robe coming down to the feet as a symbol of Hierarchical Office. But the other Angels, who bore the battle-axe,⁵ the Divine Government compels to be instructed from the former, as to the Divine judgment in this matter. For, to one, He said that he should go through the midst of Jerusalem, and place the sign upon the forehead of the just men. But to the others, "Go into the city after him and strike, and spare not your eyes, but to every one upon whom is the sign draw not near."

What would any one say concerning the Angel who said to Daniel,⁶ "The word has gone forth?" or concerning him of the first Order, who took the fire from the midst of the Cherubin; or what is more remarkable than this, foreshowing the good order that reigns amongst the Angels, the Cherubin casts the fire into the hands⁷ of him wearing the sacred stole; or concerning him who called the most Divine Gabriel, and said to him, "Make this man understand the vision,"⁸ or whatever else is recorded by the holy theologians concerning the Godlike Order of the celestial Hierarchies, to which the good order of our Hierarchy, after being assimilated to the greatest possible extent, will bear the likeness of the angelic comeliness, as it were, in reflection, taking its whole form from this, and conducted to the superessential source of order in every Hierarchy.

CAPUT IX.

Concerning the Principalities, Archangels and Angels, and concerning their Hierarchy which is last.

There remains for our religious contemplation an Order which completes the Angelic Hierarchies, which is composed of the Godlike Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. I think it neces-

¹ Zechariah i. 8-17. ² Ezek. ix. 3. ³ Ezek. ix. 3. ⁴ Ezek. x. i. ⁵ Ezek. ix. 2.

⁶ Dan. ix. 23. ⁷ Ezek. x. 2-7. ⁸ Dan. viii. 16.

sary, first to declare the meaning of their sacred appellations. For the appellation of the heavenly Principalities denotes their ruling and guiding after the Divine example with religious order most befitting the Princely Powers, and their being wholly turned to the Principality above Principality, and their directing others in a princely fashion, and their being moulded to the distinguished Principality itself, the Maker of Princedom, and that they make manifest their superessential Source of order by the regularity of their princely powers.

The Order of the Holy Archangels is of the same rank with the heavenly Principalities. For there is one Hierarchy and rank, as I said, of themselves and the Angels. But since there is not a Hierarchy which does not possess first and middle and last powers, the holy order of Archangels occupies the middle position in the Hierarchy between the extremes. For it belongs alike to the most holy Principalities and to the holy Angels. To the Principalities because it is turned in a princely fashion to the superessential Prince, and is moulded to It as far as possible, and unites the Angels after the fashion of its own well-regulated and marshalled and invisible Leadership. But it belongs to the Angels because it is of the prophetic Order, receiving in a sacerdotal fashion the Divine illumination from the first powers, and conveys the same to the Angels after the example of God, and through Angels manifests them to us in proportion to the sacred aptitude of each one of the godly persons illuminated. For the Angels, as we have already previously said, complete the whole series of celestial minds as being the last Order of the heavenly Beings, who possess the Angelic characteristic. Yea, rather, they are more properly named Angels by us than those of higher degree. Especially because their Order is occupied in making known, and is more particularly concerned with the things of the world. For the very highest Order, as being placed in the first rank near the Hidden One, we must consider as directing in spiritual things in a more hidden fashion than the Order next to itself. But the second Order, which is composed of the holy Lordships and Powers and Authorities, directs the Hierarchy of the Principalities and Archangels and Angels more clearly indeed than the first Hierarchy, but more hiddenly than the Order after it. We must bear in mind that the more revealing Order of the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels presides through each other over the Hierarchies amongst men, in order that the instruction, and conversion, and communion, and union with God may be in due order, and, in short, that the procession from God vouchsafed in a manner becoming His goodness to all the Hierarchies, and passing to all in common, may be in a most sacred regularity. Hence, the Word of God has assigned our Hierarchy to Angels, naming the distinguished Michael as Ruler of the Jewish people, and

others over other nations. For the Most High established borders of nations according to number of Angels of ¹ God. But if anyone should say, "How then were the people of the Hebrews alone conducted to the Divine illuminations?" we must answer that we ought not to throw the blame of the other nations wandering after those which are no gods, upon the faithful superintendence of the Angels. But they themselves, by their own declension, fell away from the faithful conduct towards the Divine, through self-conceit and self-will, and through their irrational reverence for things which appeared to themselves worthy of God. Even the Hebrew people are testified to have suffered the same thing; for He says, "Thou ² hast cast away knowledge of God, and hast gone after thine own heart."³ For neither have we a life governed by necessity, nor, on account of the free will of those who are objects of providential care, are the Divine rays of the providential illumination blunted. But the inaptitude of the mental visions makes the overflowing gift of Light, which comes from paternal goodness, either altogether unparticipated or impenetrable to their resistance, or makes the participations of the one fontal ray, diverse, small or great, obscure or brilliant, although that ray is one and simplex, and always the same, and ever overflowing. For even over the other nations, from whom even we have emerged to that boundless and bounteous sea of Divine Light, which is expanded for the ready reception of all, there were not placed certain alien gods. But there is one Prince of all, and to Him the Angels who religiously direct each nation conduct those who follow them. Let us consider Melchizedek ⁴ as being a Hierarch, most dear to God; not of gods which are not, but of Him Who is truly most high God. For the godly wise not only speak of him as being dear to God, but also as Priest. in order that they may clearly shew to the wise that not only was he himself turned to the true God, but further, that he became as Hierarch, a guide to others, in that wisdom which leads to the true and only Godhead.

Let me also recall this to your Hierarchical judgment—that both to Pharaoh,⁵ from the Angel who presided over the Egyptians, and to the Babylonian ⁶ Prince, from his own Angel, the watchful and ruling care of the Providence and Lordship over all was made known in visions. And leaders who were worshippers of the true God were appointed over those nations. For the interpretation of things shaped by angelic visions was made known from God through Angels to holy men akin to the Angels—Daniel and Joseph. For there is one Prince and Providence over all. And never must we think that the Godhead guides Jews by lot,

¹ Deut. xxxii. 8. ² Hosea iv. 6. ³ Jer. xvi. 12. ⁴ Gen. xiv. 18; Heb. vii. 1.

⁵ Gen. xli. 1-7. ⁶ Dan. ii. 1.

but that Angels, independently, or as of equal rank, or as in opposition, or that certain other gods preside over the other nations. But that particular phrase of the Divine Word, must be accepted according to its very religious intention ; not as though God had divided government amongst men with other gods or Angels, and had been elected by lot to the government and leadership of Israel, but in this sense—that, whereas there is one and the same forethought of the Supreme over all, which has assigned all men for their salvation to the elevating guidance of their own Angels, yet Israel, almost alone in comparison with the rest, turned itself to the Light-gift, and recognition of the true Lord. Hence the Word of God, in order to shew that Israel himself elected for the worship of the true God, says this, “He became¹ the Lord’s portion.” But as shewing that he was distributed equally with the other nations, to one of the holy Angels, for the recognition through him of the one Prince over all, he said, “That Michael² was the Leader of the Jewish people.” From this it is evident that there is one Providence for the whole, pre-eminently established above all powers, unseen and seen, and that all the Angels who preside over each nation elevate as far as possible those who follow them with a willing mind, to Itself as their proper Head.

CAPUT X.

A Repetition and Summary concerning the Angelic Order.

We have concluded, then, that the most exalted order of the minds around God, whilst being sanctified by the perfecting illumination, is purified, and illuminated, and perfected by a gift of light, at once more hidden and more manifest—more hidden, indeed, as being more intellectual, and more simplifying, and more unifying—more manifest, as being a first gift and a first manifestation, and more complete, and more shed forth to it as being more transparent. But from this order again, in due degree, the second, and from the second, the third, and from the third our Hierarchy is religiously conducted to the Beginning above beginning, and End of all good order, according to the self-same law of well-ordered regularity, in Divine harmony and proportion. But all Angels are interpreters of those above them. The very highest, indeed, of God, Who moves them, but the rest in due order of those who have been moved by God. For, to such an extent has the superessential harmony of all things provided for the religious order, and the regulated conduct of

¹ Deut. xxxii. 9.

² Dan. x. 21.

each of the rational and intellectual beings, that each rank of the Hierarchies has been placed in sacred order, and we observe every Hierarchy distributed into first and middle and last Powers. But to speak accurately, He divided each order itself, by the same Divine harmonies, on which account the theologians say that the most Divine Seraphin cry one to another,¹ indicating distinctly, as I think, by this, that the first impart their theological knowledge to the second. I might add this not inappropriately, that each celestial and human mind has within itself its own special first and middle and last rank and power, corresponding to the foresaid peculiar instructions of the several Hierarchical illuminations made known in due order, in accordance with which each one participates, so far as is lawful and permissible to himself, in the most spotless purification, the most copious light, the pre-eminent perfection. For there is nothing that is self-perfect, or absolutely without need of perfecting, except the self-perfect and pre-eminently perfect One.

CAPUT XI.

For what reason all the celestial Beings, in common, are called celestial Powers.

Now that we have defined these things, it is worthy of consideration for what reason we are accustomed to call all the angelic Beings together, celestial Powers. For it is not possible to say, as with regard to the Angels, that the Order of the holy Powers is last of all. The Orders of the superior Beings share in the holy illuminations of the last; but the last in no degree of the first; and on this account all the holy minds are called celestial Powers, but never Seraphin and Thrones and Lordships. For the last do not enjoy the whole characteristics of the highest. For the Angels, and those above the Angels, Archangels, and Principalities, and Authorities, whilst being placed after the Powers, by the Word of God, are often called by us, in conjunction with the other holy Beings, heavenly Powers. But we affirm that whilst often using the appellation of celestial Powers for all in common, we do not introduce a sort of confusion of the characteristics of each Order. Now, inasmuch as all the Divine minds are divided into three, in the celestial description given of them—into substance, and power, and energy—when we speak of them all, or some of them, indiscriminately, as celestial Beings or celestial Powers, we must consider that we describe those about whom we speak in a general way, from the substance or power of

¹ Isaiah vi. 3.

each of them. For we must not apply the superior characteristic of those holy Powers, whom we have already sufficiently distinguished, to the Beings which are entirely inferior to them, so as to overthrow the unconfused order of the angelic ranks. According to the correct account which we have already frequently given, the superior Orders possess abundantly the sacred characteristics of the inferior, but the lowest do not possess the superior completeness of the highest. For the first-manifested illuminations are revealed to them, through the first Order, in proportion to their capacity.

CAPUT XII.

Why human Hierarchs are called Angels.

But this is sometimes also asked by diligent readers of the oracles. Since the lowest Orders do not possess the completeness of the superior, for what reason is our Hierarch named by the oracles "Angel of the Lord Omnipotent"?¹ Now the statement, as I think, is not contrary to what has been before defined, for we say that the last lack the whole and pre-eminent Power of the most exalted Orders. For they possess in part and degree according to the one harmonious and binding fellowship of all things. For example, the Order of the holy Cherubin possess wisdom and knowledge in a higher degree. But the Orders of the Beings beneath them possess also themselves wisdom and knowledge, but nevertheless partially as compared with them and in a lower degree. For the possession of wisdom throughout is common to all the spiritual which bear the image of God. But the being near and first, or second and inferior, is not common, but as has been determined for each in its own degree. This also one might safely define respecting all the spiritual Minds, for, as the first possess abundantly the goodly characteristics of the inferior, so the last possess those goodly qualities, not indeed in the same degree, but subordinately. There is, then, as I think, nothing absurd if the Word of God calls our Hierarch Angel, since he participates, according to his own capacity, in the prophetic characteristic of the Angels, and elevates himself, as far as possible, to the likeness of their interpreting powers. But you will find that the Word of God calls gods, both the celestial Beings above us, and the holy men² amongst us, who are most beloved of God,³ although the Divine Hiddenness is transcendently elevated and established above all; and no created Being can properly and entirely be said to be like unto It, except those intellectual and

¹ Mal. ii. 7.

² ἁγῶνας.

³ Ex. vii. 1; Ps. lxxxii. 6.

rational Beings who are entirely and wholly turned to its Oneness as far as possible, and who elevate themselves indomitably to its Divine illuminations by their imitation of God, if I may so speak, according to their power, and are deemed worthy of the same appellation as God.

CAPUT XIII.

For what reason the Prophet Isaiah is said to have been purified by the Seraphin.

Come, then, let us examine this as best we can, why one of the Seraphin¹ is said to be sent to one of the theologians. For some one may object that not one of the inferior Angels, but one himself enrolled amongst the very highest Beings cleanses the Prophet. Some, indeed, do affirm that, according to the definition already given of the mutual relation of all the Minds, this portion of the Word of God does not name one of the highest around God as having come for the cleansing of the theologian, but that some one of the Angels placed over us as a sacred Minister of the Prophet's cleansing is called by the same name as the Seraphin, on the ground that the removal of the fault spoken of and the restoration of him who was cleansed to the Divine obedience² was through fire; and they say that this oracle speaks simply of one of the Seraphin, not of those who are established around God, but of the Powers established over us for the purpose of cleansing. Now another brought forward to me a by no means foolish defence of this present position. For he said that that great One, whoever he might be—the Angel who formed this vision—for the purpose of teaching the theologian Divine things, referred his own cleansing function to God, and after God, to the first working Hierarchy. And was not this statement true? For he who said this affirmed that the Divine Power passes to all in its frequent visitations, and penetrates all irresistibly, and yet is invisible to all, not only as being superessentially elevated above all, but as secretly transmitting its providential energies to all; yea, rather, it is manifested to all the spiritual Beings in due degree, and conducts its own gift of Light to the most reverend Beings, through whom, as being of the first Order, itself distributes in due order to the subordinate in proportion to the power of each Order to bear the vision of God. Or to speak more strictly, and through familiar illustrations (for if they fall short of the Glory of God, Who is exalted above all, yet they are more instructive to us), the transmission of the sun's ray passes most easily to matter of the first Order, as being

¹ Isaiah vi. 6-7.

² Isaiah vi. 7.

more transparent than all, and through this lights up its own splendour more brilliantly. But when it strikes more dense matter, its transmitted brilliancy becomes more obscure, from the inaptitude of the matter illuminated for the transmission of the gift of Light. And from this it is, little by little, contracted so as to almost perfectly exclude the passage of Light. Again, the heat of fire transmits itself chiefly to things that are more receptive, and yielding, and conducive to assimilation to itself. But, as regards repellent substances, either it leaves none, or a very light trace of its fiery energy. More than this, when it comes in contact with things not congenial, through substances favourable to its proper action—First, if it chance to enflame things easily changed to its heat, and through them, either water or some other substance which is not easily heated, it heats them in proportion to their capacity. After the same rule, then, of Nature's well ordered method, the primal regulation of all good order, both visible and invisible, manifests supernaturally the brightness of its own gift of Light to the most exalted Beings in abundant streams of first-manifestation, and through these the Beings after them partake of the Divine ray. For these, as first knowing God, and striving pre-eminently after Divine virtue and to become first-workers, are deemed worthy of the power and energy for the imitation of God, to the utmost degree. And these lovingly elevate the beings after them to an equality with themselves as far as possible, by imparting ungrudgingly to them the splendour which rests upon themselves, and these again to those subordinate. Throughout every Order the first rank imparts its gift to that after it. The Divine Light thus rests upon all, in due proportion, with providential forethought. There is, then, for all those who are illuminated, a Source of illumination—God, that is, naturally, and really, and properly, as Essence of Light, and Cause of Being and Vision itself. But, by ordinance and by Divine imitation, the superior Order is successively the Source to that Order which follows it, by the fact that the Divine rays are poured through this to that. All the remaining Angels, then, naturally regard the highest Order of the heavenly minds as Source of every sacred knowledge and imitation of God, since through them the Divine illumination is distributed to all, and even to us. Wherefore they refer every holy energy of Divine imitation to God indeed as *Cause*, but to the first Godlike minds as being first authors and teachers of Divine things.

The first Order, then, of the holy Angels, possess more than all, the characteristic of fire; and the distribution of the streams of Divine wisdom; and the faculty of knowing the highest science of the Divine illuminations; and the characteristic of Thrones, exhibiting their expansion for the reception of God. But the ranks of the subordinate Beings possess the faculty of fire, of

wisdom, of knowledge, of Divine reception—but in a lower degree. And looking to the first, and through them, as being worthy of the Divine imitation in the first degree, they are conducted to the highest possible likeness of God. The aforesaid holy characteristics, then, which the Beings after them possess through the first, they attribute to those Beings themselves as Hierarchs after God.

He who said this, was accustomed to affirm that this vision was shewn to the Theologian¹ through one of the holy and blessed Angels who are set over us, and from his illuminating direction that he, the Prophet, was elevated to that spiritual vision in which he saw the most exalted Beings, to speak symbolically, fixed under God, and with God, and around² God, and the Supreme Eminence above all eminence, elevated unspeakably above all seated on high in the midst of the most exalted Beings. The Theologian then learned, from the things seen, that as compared with every supéressential pre-eminence, the Divine was seated above every visible and invisible power, and that He is exalted above all, as Absolute—not even comparable to the first of created Beings. Further also, that He is the very Being of all, and Cause of all cause, and unalterable centre of the undissolved continuance of all, from Whom is both the being and the well-being of the most exalted Powers themselves. Then he was instructed in the God-like qualities of the most holy Seraphin, whose sacred appellation signifies the Fiery, concerning which we shall shortly speak, so as to shew as best we can, the hidden mysteries of the empyrion faculty which leads to Divine imitation. But when the holy Prophet viewed the free and most exalted restoration to the Divine, in first, middle, and last conceptions, as depicted in the representation of the six wings; and further, when he contemplated their innumerable feet and many faces, and their extended wings—some under their feet, and the other over their faces, and their perpetual movement of their middle wings—he was brought to the intellectual knowledge of the things seen. Since there was manifested to him the power of the most exalted minds for deep penetration and numerous contemplation, and their sacred reverence which they have, above earthly Beings; for the bold, and courageous, and impossible scrutiny into higher and deeper mysteries; and the incessant and high-flying perpetual movement in their orderly striving after the Divine imitation, but he was also taught the hidden mysteries of that Divine and much esteemed heavenly Hymn of Praise—the Angel, whilst forming the vision, imparting, as far as possible, his own Divine knowledge to the theologian. He also taught him this, that the participation, as far as possible, in the Divine and radiant purity,

¹ Isaiah vi.² John i. 1.

is a purification to the pure, in whatever degree. But this being accomplished from the very Godhead by most exalted causes to all the sacred Minds by a supernatural Hiddenness, is in a manner more manifest, and exhibits and distributes itself in a higher degree to the highest powers around itself. But with regard to the second, or us the lowest intellectual powers, as each is distant as regards the Divine likeness from itself, so it contracts its brilliant manifestation to the single unknowableness of its own hiddenness. But he illuminates the second, severally through the first; and, if one must speak briefly, he is firstly brought from hiddenness to manifestation through the first powers. This, then, the Theologian was taught by the Angel who was leading him to Light—that purification, and all the Divine energies, being made known through the first Beings, are distributed to all the rest, according to the aptitude of each for the deifying participations. Wherefore also, the characteristic of purification by fire he naturally attributed to the Seraphin after God. There is nothing, then, absurd if the Seraphin is said to purify the Prophet. For, as God purifies all, by being cause of all purification, yea, rather (for I use a familiar illustration) as our Hierarch, when purifying or enlightening through his Deacons or Priests, is said himself to purify and enlighten, since the Orders consecrated through him attribute to him their own proper functions; so also the Angel who effected the purification of the Prophet attributed his own purifying science and power to God, as Cause, but to the Seraphin as first-operating Hierarch. As any one might say with Angelic reverence, whilst teaching one who was being purified by himself, “There is a pre-eminent Source, and Essence, and Worker, and Cause of the cleansing wrought upon you from me—He Who brings both the first Beings into Being, and holds them together by their fixity around Himself, and keeps them without change and without fall; moving them to the first participations of His own Providential energies. For this He who taught me these things used to say that this shews the mission of the Seraphin. Now that Hierarch and Leader after God, the Glory of the most exalted Beings, from whom I was taught to purify after the example of God—this is He, Who cleanses thee through me—through Whom the Cause and Creator of all cleansing brought forth His own provident energies from the hidden Abyss, even to us.” These things, then, he taught me, and I impart them to thee. Let it be a part of thy spiritual and discriminating skill, either that each of the reasons assigned should be freed from objection, and to honour one before the other as having likelihood and good reason, and perhaps the truth: or from yourself, to find out something more allied to the real truth, or to learn from another; God, of course, giving the Word, and Angels supplying it; and to reveal to us, the friends of Angels, a more luminous view, if it should be so, and one to me specially welcome.

CAPUT XIV.

What the number attributed to the Angels signifies.

This also is worthy, in my opinion, of spiritual consideration—that the teaching of the oracles concerning the Angels, affirms that they are thousand thousands, and myriad myriads; cumulating and multiplying respecting them the supreme limit of our numbers, and through these shewing clearly that the ranks of the celestial Beings cannot be numbered by us; for many are the blessed hosts of the celestial minds, surpassing the weak and contracted measurement of our mundane calculation. And being definitely known to the celestial and heavenly intelligence and science amongst themselves, which is given to them in profusion by the supremely Divine and infinitely wise Head, and essential Cause and connecting Force, and encompassing Term of all created things together. (Dan. vii. 10.)

CAPUT XV.

What are the corporeal likenesses of the angelic Powers? what the fiery? what the likeness to man? what are the eyes? what the nostrils? what the ears? what the mouths? what the touch? what the eyelids? what the eyebrows? what the prime? what the teeth? what the shoulders? what the elbows? what the hands? what the heart? what the breasts? what the back? what the feet? what the wings? what the wrestler? what the robe? what the shining raiment? what the sacerdotal? what the girdles? what the rods? what the spears? what the battle-axe? what the measuring lines? what the winds? what the clouds? what the brass? what the electron? what the choir? what the clapping of hands? what the colours of transparent stones? what the likeness of the lion? what the likeness of the ox? what the likeness of the eagle? what the horses? what the various kinds of coloured horses? what the rivers? what the chariots of the Angels?

Come, then, let us at last, if you please, rest our mental vision from the strain of lofty contemplations, which is fit for Angels, and when we have descended to the divided and manifold picture of the manifold variety of the angelic forms, let us then return analytically from the same. as from images, to the naked¹ truth of the celestial minds. Let this first be borne in mind, that the

¹ τὴν ἀπλότητα.

explanations of the typical likenesses represent the same ranks of the celestial Beings. as sometimes ruling, and at other times as being ruled, and the last as ruling, and the first as being ruled ; and the same, as has been said, as having first, and middle, and last powers—without introducing anything absurd into the description, according to the following mode of explanation. For if indeed we were to say that some are ruled by those above them, and then that they were ruling the same, and that those above, whilst ruling those below, are ruled by those same, who are being ruled, the thing would manifestly be absurd, and mixed with all sorts of confusion. But if we say that the same rule, and are ruled, but no longer the same, or from the same, but that each Order is itself ruled by those above it, but rules those below it, one might say appropriately that the Divinely pictured forms in the oracles, the self-same may sometimes properly and truly apply to both first and middle and last powers. Now the elevation by being turned to things above, and their being drawn inflexibly around each other, as being guardians of their own proper powers, and their possession, with regard to those after them, of the power to provide for them by a mutual communication, belongs truly to all the heavenly Beings ; although to some pre-eminently and wholly, as we have often said, but to others partially and in a less degree. But we must keep our discourse within bounds, and must search in our first explanation of the types for what reason the Word of God prefers the sacred representation of fire in preference to almost every other.¹ You will find it, then, representing not only wheels of fire, but also living creatures of fire² ; and men flashing like lightning³ ; and placing around the heavenly Beings themselves heaps of coals of fire⁴ ; and rivers of flame, flowing with irresistible force.⁵ But also it says that the thrones are of fire⁶ ; and that the most exalted Cherubin glows with fire, it shows from their appellation ; and it attributes the characteristic and energy of fire⁷ to them ; and everywhere, above and below, it prefers pre-eminently the representation by the image of fire. I think, then, the similitude of fire,⁸ denotes the likeness of the Divine minds to God, in the highest degree, for the holy theologians frequently describe the superessential and formless Being by *fire*, as having many likenesses, if I may be permitted to say so, of the Divine character, in things visible. For the sensible fire is, so to speak, in everything, and passes through everything unmingled, and is exalted above all, and whilst giving light to everything, is at the same time concealed, unknown in its essential nature, except when it may happen to shew its own proper energy in any matter lying

¹ Dan. vii. 9.² Ezek. i. 13, 16.³ Ezek. i. 14.⁴ Ezek. x. 2.⁵ Dan. vii. 10.⁶ Dan. vii. 9.⁷ Isaiah vi. 6, 7.⁸ Le Cratyle de Platon i., 302.

near it. It is both incomprehensible and invisible ; itself subduing all things, and bringing under its own energy anything in which it may happen to be ; unchangeable, imparting itself to all things near it, whatever they may be ; renewing by its rousing heat, and giving light by its illuminations which cannot be hid ; uncontrollable, unmingled, separating, unchangeable, elevating, penetrating, lofty, subject to no grovelling inferiority, ever moving, self-moving, moving other things, comprehending, incomprehended, needing no other, imperceptibly increasing itself, displaying its own magnitude to the materials receiving it, energetic, powerful, present in all, when unobserved seeming not to be, but manifesting itself suddenly, according to its own proper nature by friction, when, as it were, we seek to find it ; and again flying away uncontrollably it remains undiminished, in all the joyful distributions of itself. And one might find many characteristics of fire, appropriate to display the Divine Energy, as it were, in sensible images. Those, then, who are wise in the things of God, knowing this, depict the celestial Beings under the image of Fire, shewing their Godlike nature, and their imitation of God, as far as permissible.

But they also depict them under the likeness of men,¹ on account of their intellectual nature, and their having the faculty of looking to things above, and their straight and erect form, and their innate faculty of ruling and guiding ; and whilst being least in natural power as compared with the powers of irrational Beings, yet ruling over all by their superior power of mind, and by their superiority in rational science, and their innate unslavishness and indomitableness of soul. It is possible, then, I think, to find within each of the many parts of our body images harmonious to the heavenly powers, whilst we affirm that the powers of vision² denote the most transparent elevation towards the Divine light ; and again, the tender liquid and unrepellent, but sensitive, and pure, and unfolded reception, free from all passion, of the supremely Divine illuminations.

But the discriminating powers of the nostrils denote the receptive power of the distributed odours, sweet beyond conception, and the power of distinguishing accurately things which are not such, and entirely rejecting them.³

The powers of the ear denote the conscious participation and reception of the Divine inspiration.

The powers of taste denote the fulness of the intellectual food, and the reception of the Divine and nourishing streams.⁴

The powers of touch denote the skilful discrimination of that which is suitable or injurious.⁵

¹ Gen. xxxii. 24. ² Ezek. i. 18 ; *ibid* ix. 5. ³ Gen. viii. 21. ⁴ Gen. xix. 3.

⁵ Gen. xxxii. 25.

The eyelids and eyebrows denote the guarding of the conceptions which reveal God.

The figures of manhood and youth denote the perpetual bloom and vigour of life.¹

The teeth denote the dividing of the perfect nourishment given to us. For each intellectual Being divides and multiplies by a provident faculty the unified conception given to it by the more Divine Order, in proportion necessary for the instruction of the inferior.

The shoulders and elbows,² and further, the hands,³ denote the power of making, and striving, and accomplishing.

The heart is a symbol of the Godlike life, dispersing its own life-giving power to the objects of its forethought after the Divine likeness.

The chest again denotes the invincible and protective faculty of the life-giving distribution as being placed above the heart.

The back, the holding together the whole productive powers⁴ of life.

The feet⁵ denote the movement, and quickness, and skilfulness of the perpetual movement advancing towards Divine things. Wherefore also the Word of God represented the feet of the holy Minds as being placed under their wings⁶; for the wing displays the quickness of instruction, and the progress towards the heavenly and higher things, and the elevation above all earthly things for love of higher. But the elevation of the wings denotes their being in no respect earthly, but in all purity raised to the higher things without hindrance.

But the naked and unshod denotes the unfettered, agile, and unrestrained, and free from all external superfluity, and their assimilation to the Divine simplicity as far as attainable.

But since again the simple and variegated wisdom⁷ both clothes the naked and distributes certain implements to them to carry, let us unfold, according to our power, the sacred garments and implements of the celestial Minds. The shining and glowing raiment, I think, signifies the Divine likeness after the image of fire—brilliant⁸—and their distribution of Light, in consequence of their repose in Heaven, where is the Light. And their complete illuminating as superior Beings, and their being illuminated as inferior. But the sacerdotal robe denotes their instruction⁹ in Divine and mystical visions, and the consecration of their whole life. But the girdles signify their guard over their productive powers, and their own collected habit to be turned to Oneness with It, and to

¹ Mark xvi. 5. ² Dan. x. 6. ³ Dan. x. 10. ⁴ Dan. x. 5.

⁵ Isaiah vi. 2. ⁶ Ezek. i. 6. ⁷ Eph. iii. 10. ⁸ John xx. 12. ⁹ Dan. x. 5.

encircle It with good order by being drawn around itself by an unbroken identity.

The rods signify the kingly and directing faculty, making all things straight. The spears¹ and the battle-axe² denote the dividing of things unlike, and the sharp and energetic and drastic operation of the discriminating powers. The geometrical³ and technical⁴ articles denote the founding, and building, and completing, and whatever else belongs to the instructing and guiding forethought, for the subordinate Orders. But sometimes the implements of the holy Angels presented to our view are the symbols of God's judgment to ourselves. Some representing His correcting⁵ instruction or avenging righteousness.⁶ Others freedom from peril, or end of education, or resumption of former well-being, or addition of other gifts, small or great, material or intellectual.⁷ Nor would a discriminating mind, in any case whatever, have difficulty in properly adapting things visible to things invisible.

But the fact that they are named winds⁸ denotes their rapid flight, passing almost instantaneously to all things; and their movement in passing from above to below, and again from below to above—their elevating the second to the height above, but moving the first to a common and provident conduct of the inferior Orders. But perhaps someone would say that the appellation of wind, to the aerial spirit, also denotes the Divine likeness of the celestial minds. For this also bears a likeness and type of the Divine energy (as we have demonstrated more fully in the symbolic theology, in our explanation of the four elements) in accordance with the moving and life-producing, and the rapid and resistless procession of Nature, and the unobserved and invisible Hiddenness of the moving springs and terminations. For He says, "Thou knowest not whence it cometh⁹ nor whither it goeth." But also the Word of God attributes to them the appearance of a cloud,¹⁰ signifying through this that the holy minds are filled in an unearthly degree with the hidden Light; receiving the first manifestation without boasting, which they distribute ungrudgingly to the second, as a secondary manifestation, and in proportion to their capacity. Yea, further, that the productive, and life-producing, and increasing, and perfecting power is enshrined in them, in consequence of the spiritual production of showers, which summon the receptive womb of the earth, by fruitful showers, to the life-giving pangs of birth.

Also, the Word of God attributes to the celestial Beings a like-

¹ Gen. iii. 24. ² Ezek. ix. 2. ³ Ezek. xi. 3. ⁴ Amos vii. 7. ⁵ Num. xxii. 31.

⁶ 2 Kings xxiv. 16. ⁷ Zech. iii. 9. ⁸ Ps. civ. 3; Dan. vii. 2.

⁹ John iii. 8. ¹⁰ Ezek. x. 4.

ness to Brass,¹ Electron,² and many-coloured stones. Electron, as being partly like silver, partly like gold, denotes the incorruptible, as in gold, with unexpended, and undiminished, and spotless brilliancy, and the brightness as in silver, and a luminous and celestial radiance. But to the Brass, according to the reasons assigned, must be attributed either the likeness of fire or that of gold.

We must consider the many-coloured appearances of stones, denotes either, as white, the luminous ; or as red, the fiery ; or as yellow, the golden ; or as green, the youthful and the full grown ; and within each likeness you will find an explanation which teaches the inner meaning of the typical images.

But since, I think, according to our power, this has been sufficiently said, we will pass to the sacred explanation of the Divine representations of the celestial minds through wild beasts. We must consider that the shape of a Lion³ signifies the leading, and robust, and indomitable, and the assimilation as far as possible to the unutterable Deity, by the concealment of the spiritual footsteps, and by the mysteriously secret covering of the path leading to itself during Divine illumination.

The image of the Ox⁴ denotes the strong and the mature, turning up the spiritual furrows for the reception of the heavenly and productive powers. The Horns the guarding and indomitable.

The representation of the Eagle⁵—the kingly, and soaring, and swift in flight, and quickness, and wariness, and agility, and cleverness in search of the nourishment which makes strong ; and the unimpeded, straight, and unflinching gaze towards the bounteous and brilliant splendour of the Divine rays of the sun, with the robust endurance of its visual powers.

That of Horses represents obedience and docility ; when they are white, brilliancy, and especially their affinity to the Divine Light ; when they are black, the Hidden ; when they are red, the fiery ; when they are black and white, the uniting of the extremities by the power passing through them, and joining the first to the second, and the second to the first, by twining or directing. But if we did not consult the proportion of our discourse, we might, not inappropriately, adapt the particular characteristics of the living creatures spoken of, and all their bodily representations to the heavenly Powers, upon the principle of dissimilar similitudes. For instance, their appearance of anger—to spiritual manliness, of which anger is the last echo, but desire—to the Divine love, and to speak summarily, referring all the senses and many parts of irrational Beings to the immaterial conceptions and unified Powers of the celestial Beings. But not only is this sufficient for the

¹ Ezek. xi. 3. ² Ezek. viii. 2. ³ Ezek. i. 10. ⁴ Ibid. ⁵ Ibid.

wise, but even an explanation of one of the dissimilar representations would be sufficient for the accurate description of similar things after the same fashion. But we must examine the fact that Rivers¹ are spoken of, and Wheels² and Chariots,³ as associated with the heavenly Beings. The rivers of fire signify the Divine streams providing for them an ungrudging and incessant flow, and nourishing the productive powers of life. The Chariots the conjoined communion of those of the same rank in united fellowship. The wheels as being winged, advancing without turning and without deviation, denote the power of their advancing energy within a straight and direct way, whilst their whole intellectual track is Divinely directed towards the same undeviating and direct way. But it is possible to interpret in another form the sacred description of the spiritual wheels, for the name Gel, Gel, is given to them, as the theologian says. This shows, according to the Hebrew tongue, revolutions and revelations. For the Divine wheels of fire have revolutions, by their perpetual movement around the Goodness itself; but revelations by the explanation of things hidden, and by the instruction of things on earth, and by the descending procession of the sublime illuminations to things below. There remains for accurate explanation, the statement respecting the rejoicing of the celestial Orders⁴; for they are utterly incapable of our impassioned pleasure. But they are said to rejoice with God, over the discovery of what was lost, in accordance with their Divine good nature, and that Godlike and ungrudging rejoicing over the care and salvation of those who are turned to God—with that joy beyond description of which also holy men often partake, whilst the deifying illuminations of the Deity rest upon them. Let it suffice, then, to have said this much concerning the Divine representations, which no doubt falls short of their accurate explanation, but which will prevent us, I think, from servilely resting in the resemblances of the types. But if you should say that we have not mentioned the whole Angelic Powers, depicted in the oracles, or energies, or likenesses, we answer in truth that we do not possess the celestial knowledge of some; and further, with regard to these, we have need of another instructor to guide us into Light. But other things as being parallel to the things said, we have omitted, out of regard to the length of the discourse; and the hidden mysteries, beyond our capacity, we have honoured by silence.

¹ Dan. vii. 10. ² Ezek. x. 9. ³ 2 Kings ii. 11. ⁴ Luke xv. 10.

ECCLESIASTICAL HIERARCHY.

CAPUT I.

TO MY FELLOW PRESBYTER TIMOTHY.
DIONYSIUS THE PRESBYTER.

*What is the traditional view of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,
and what is its scope?*

WE must, then, demonstrate, most pious of pious sons, that ours is a Hierarchy of the inspired and Divine and Deifying science, and energy and perfection. This we will do, from the celestial and most sacred oracles—for those who have been initiated with the initiation of the sacred revelation derived from the hierarchical mysteries and traditions. But see that you do not put to scorn the things the most holy. Take good heed, and you will then guard the honour of the hidden things of God by intellectual and obscure definitions, carefully guarding them from the participation and defilement of the profane, and communicating them reverently only to persons the most holy. For thus, as the Word of God has taught us who feast at His Banquet, even Jesus Himself—the supremely Divine and superessential Mind, the Head and Being, and most supremely Divine Power of every Hierarchy and Sanctification and Divine operation—illuminates the blessed Beings who are superior to us, in a manner more clear, and at the same time more fresh, and assimilates them to His own Light in proportion to their ability to receive. As for ourselves, by the love of things beautiful, elevated to Himself, and elevating us, He folds together our many diversities, and by making them into an unified and Divine life, suitable to a sacred vocation both as to habit and action, He Himself bequeaths the power of the Divine Priesthood, from which, by approaching to the holy exercise of the priestly office, we become nearer to the Beings above us, by assimilation, according to our power, to the stability and unchangeableness of their steadfastness in holy things. Hence, by looking upwards to the blessed and supremely Divine Glory of Jesus, and reverently gazing upon whatever we are permitted to see, and being illuminated with the knowledge of the visions, we shall be able to become, as regards the science of Divine mysteries, both purified and purifying—images of Light, and workers with God, perfected and perfecting.

What, then, is the Hierarchy of the Angels¹ and Archangels, and supermundane Principalities and Authorities, Powers and Lordships, Divine Thrones, or Beings of the same ranks as the Thrones—which the Word of God describes as being near, and always about God, and with² God, naming them in the Hebrew tongue Cherubin and Seraphin—what pertains to the sacred Orders and divisions of their ranks and Hierarchies you will find in the books we have written—not as befits their dignity, but to the best of our ability—in which we have followed the Word of God as it describes their Hierarchy in the Holy Scriptures. Nevertheless, it is necessary to say this, that both that and every Hierarchy which we are now celebrating has one and the same power throughout the whole of its hierarchical functions, and that the Hierarchy himself, according to his nature, and aptitude, and rank, is initiated in Divine things, and deified and imparts to his subordinates according to the meetness of each, the sacred deification which comes to himself from God. Likewise, that the subordinates follow the superior, but elevate the inferior towards things in advance ; and that some go before, and, as far as possible, give the lead to others ; and that each, as far as may be, participates in Him Who is the truly Beautiful, and Wise, and Good, through this Divine and sacerdotal harmony.

But the Beings and ranks above us, of whom we have already made a reverent mention, are both incorporeal and their Hierarchy is intellectual and supermundane. But we observe that our hierarchy, conformably to our nature, abounds in a manifold variety of material symbols, from which, in proportion to our capacity, we are conducted by sacerdotal functions to the onelike deification—God and Divine Virtue. They indeed, as being minds, perceive, according to laws laid down for themselves. But we are led by sensible figures to Divine contemplations as is possible to us. And to speak truly, there is One to Whom all the Godlike aspire. But they do not partake of this One and the Same in one manner, but as the Divine ordinance distributes to each a meet inheritance. Now these things have been treated more systematically in the Treatise concerning “Intellectual and Sensible.” But now I will attempt to describe our Hierarchy, and its head and substance as best I can ; invoking Jesus the Head and Perfection of all Hierarchies. Every Hierarchy, then, is, according to our august tradition, the whole description of the sacred things falling under it—a most complete summary of the sacred rites of this or that Hierarchy, as the case may be. Our Hierarchy, then, is called and is the systematic account of the whole sacred rites included within it ; according to which the divine Hierarchy, being initiated, will have within himself the

¹ See Epistle to Trallians.

² John i. 1.

participation of the most sacred things, as chief¹ of Hierarchy. For as he who speaks of Hierarchy speaks of the order of the whole sacred rites collectively, so he who mentions Hierarchy denotes the inspired and godly man—one who understands accurately all sacred knowledge, in whom is completed and recognized, in its purity, the whole Hierarchy.

Of this Hierarchy, as supreme Head, is the Triad—the Fountain of Life—the Essence of Goodness—the One Cause of things that be—from Whom both being and well-being come to things that are—through goodness. Of this supremely Divine blessedness—exalted above all—the threefold One—the really existing—the will—inscrutable to us, but known to itself—is the rational salvation of Beings amongst us and above us. But that salvation cannot otherwise take place, than upon the condition that those who are being saved become deified. But the deification is the assimilation and oneness towards God, as far as permissible. Now this is the common end of every Hierarchy—the clinging love towards God and Divine things; a love divinely sanctified into oneness with Him; and for the sake of this, the complete and unswerving removal of things contrary—the knowledge of things as they are in themselves—the vision and clear knowledge of sacred truth—the Divine participation of the uniform perfection, the One itself, as far as permissible; the banquet of contemplation, nourishing intellectually and deifying every man who elevates himself towards it.

Let us affirm, then, that the Divine Blessedness, the self-existent Godhead, Source of deification, from Whom comes the deification of those deified, bequeathed by Divine Goodness the Hierarchy, for the salvation and deification of all rational and intellectual Beings. To the supermundane and blessed inheritors it is bequeathed in a manner more immaterial and intellectual (for God does not move them to Divine things from without, but intellectually, and they are illuminated as to the Divine will from within, with a pure and unearthly brilliancy), but to us—that which is given to them simply, and uniformly, and enveloped—is given from the Divinely transmitted oracles, in a variety and multitude of divisible symbols, as we are able to receive it. For the Divinely transmitted oracles are the very Being of our Hierarchy. But we affirm that these oracles are most august—all such as were given from our inspired initiators in Divinely written letters of the Word of God. And further, whatever our leaders have revealed to us from the same holy men, by a less earthly instruction, very similar to the Heavenly Hierarchy, from mind to mind; through the medium of speech, and so corporeal, but nevertheless more

¹ *Ἱεραρχίας ἐπὶ πάντων.*

immaterial—without writing. Nor did the inspired Hierarchs transmit ¹ these things in conceptions clear to the commonalty of the Divine Service, but in sacred symbols. For it is not every one that is holy, nor as the oracles affirm does knowledge belong to all.²

Of necessity, then, the first leaders of our Hierarchy, after they had themselves been filled with the sacred gift from the super-essential Godhead, and sent by the Divine Goodness to extend the same gift to those without ; and they themselves as godly, desiring the instruction and deification of those after them, without grudging imparted to us—by written and unwritten revelations—in accordance with sacred injunctions, things supercelestial in sensible images—the simple and enfolded, in the variegated and multiform ; the things Divine, in things human, things immaterial in things material ; the superessential in things earthly. Nor did they do this on account merely of the unholy, to whom it is not permitted even to touch the symbols, but because our Hierarchy is, as I said, a kind of symbol adapted to our condition, which needs things material for our more Divine elevation from these to things spiritual. The reasons, however, of the symbols have been revealed to the Divine initiators, which it is not permitted to explain to those who are yet being initiated ; as knowing that the Lawgivers for rites Divinely taught deliberately arranged the Hierarchy in well-established and unconfused ranks, and in proportionate and sacred distributions of that which was convenient to each according to capacity. Wherefore, trusting in those Thy sacred promises, for it is well to recall them to your recollection, that, since every Hierarchical doctrine is of supreme importance, you will not commit them to any other but those Godlike initiators of the same rank with yourself, and will persuade them to promise, according to the regulation of our Hierarchy, to touch pure things purely, and to communicate the things of God to the godly alone, and things perfect to those who are perfecting, and the most holy things to the holy ; I have entrusted this Divine gift to thee, in addition to many other Hierarchical gifts.

CAPUT II.

Concerning those who are being initiated in illumination.

We have, then, reverently affirmed that the scope of our Hierarchy is this—the assimilation and oneness with God as far as permissible. But as the Divine oracles teach, we shall attain this only by the love and the religious performance of the worshipful

¹ Mark iv. 11.

² 1 Cor. viii. 7.

Commandments. For He says : " He ¹ that loveth Me will keep My Commandments, and My Father will love him, and will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." What, then, is the beginning of the religious performance of the most august commandments? The teaching of the sacred and most Divine regeneration, which forms an aptitude in the habits of our soul for the reception of the other Divine sayings and doings ²; the preparation of the way for our ascent to the supercelestial rest.³ For, as our illustrious Leader was used to say, the very first movement of the mind towards Divine things is the love of God, but the very earliest approach towards the religious performance of the Divine commandments is the unutterable creation of our being in God. For if our ⁴ being in God is the Divine engendering, never would he know, and certainly not perform any of the Divine instructions, who had not first his beginning to be in God. To speak after the manner of men, is it not necessary that we should first begin to be, and then to do what belongs to us? For he who does not exist at all has neither movement nor even beginning. But he who actually exists does or suffers only those things suitable to his own condition. This, then, as I think, is clear. Let us next contemplate the Divine symbols of the birth in God. And I pray, let no uninitiated person approach the sight; for neither is it without danger to gaze upon the glorious rays of the sun with weak eyes, nor is it without peril to put our hand to things above us. For right was the priesthood of the Law when rejecting Osias,⁵ because he put his hand to sacred things; and Korah,⁶ to things above his capacity; and Nadab⁷ and Abihu, because they treated things within their own province unholy.

II.—*Mystery of Illumination.*

The Hierarch, then, wishing ⁸ that all men whatsoever should be saved by their assimilation towards God, and come to a recognition of truth, proclaims to all the veritable Gospel—that God being compassionate towards men upon earth, from His own proper and inherent goodness, Himself deigned to come to us with outstretched arms, on account of loving kindness towards men; and, by union with Himself, like as by fire, to assimilate things that have been made one, in proportion to their aptitude for deification. "For as many as received Him, to them gave He power⁹ to become sons of God—to those believing on His Name, who were begotten, not from bloods, nor from will of flesh, but from God."

He who has felt a religious longing to possess these truly

¹ John xiv. 23. ² John i. 13. ³ John iii. 5. ⁴ See Baptismal Offices.

⁵ 2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21. Num. xvi. 1-33. ⁷ Num. iii. 4. ⁸ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

⁹ John i. 12, 13.

celestial gifts, comes to some one of the initiated, and persuades him to act as his conductor to the Hierarchy. He then promises wholly to follow the teaching that shall be given to him, and prays him to undertake the superintendence of his introduction, and of all his life afterwards. But he, though religiously longing for his salvation, when he measures human infirmity against the loftiness of the undertaking, is seized with a shivering and sense of incapacity. Nevertheless, at last, he promises, with a good grace, to do what is requested, and takes and leads him to the chief Hierarchy. He then benevolently receives the man, as a sheep upon his shoulders, and admits the two men, and worships and glorifies, with a mental thanksgiving and bodily prostration, the One Author¹ and Finisher of Good ; from Whom those who are being called are called, and those who are being saved are saved.

He then collects the whole religious Order into the holy Choir for co-operation and common rejoicing over the man's salvation ; but also for *thanksgiving* to the Divine Goodness. At the commencement he chants a certain hymn found in the oracles, accompanied by the whole body of the Church. And after this, when he has kissed the holy table, he advances to the man standing before him, and demands of him, what has brought him here ? When the man, out of love to God, has confessed, according to the instruction of his sponsor, his ungodliness,² his ignorance of the truly beautiful, his insufficiency for the Divine life, and demands through his holy mediation to attain to God and Divine things, he testifies to him that his approach ought to be entire, as to God Who is All Perfect, and without blemish. When he has expounded to him fully the Divine course of life, and has demanded of him, if he would thus live ; after his promise he places his right hand upon his head, and when he has sealed him, he commands the priests to register the man and his sponsor.

When these have enrolled the names, he offers a holy prayer, and when the whole Church have completed this with him, he unlooses his sandals and removes his clothing by means of the Deacons. Then when he has placed him facing the west, and whilst he beats with aversion his hands towards the same quarter, he thrice commands him to breathe scorn upon Satan, and further, to profess the words of the renunciation. When he has witnessed his threefold renunciation, he turns him to the east, after he has confessed this three times, and has looked up to heaven and extended his hands thitherward, he commands him to be subject to Christ, and to all the Divinely transmitted oracles of God. When the man has done this, he witnesses again for him his threefold confession, and again, when he has thrice

¹ Phil. ii. 13. ² ἀθεότηα ; Matt. vi. 24 ; Eph. iv. 5.

confessed, after prayer, he gives thanks and lays his hand upon him. When the Deacons have entirely unclothed him, the Priests bring the holy oil of the chrism. Then he begins the chrism, through the threefold sealing, and assigns the man to the Priests for the anointing of his whole body, while he himself advances to the mother of filial adoption, and dedicates the water within it by the sacred invocations, and consecrates it by three cruciform affusions of the holy myrrh. And when he has invoked three times, as in the injection of the myrrh, the holy melody of the inspiration of the Divinely rapt Prophets, he orders the man to be brought forward. When one of the Priests, from the register, has announced the name of himself and his surety, he is conducted by the Priests over the water to the hand of the Hierarchy, being led by the hand to him. Then the Hierarchy, standing above, when the Priests have again called aloud, near the Hierarchy, within the water, the name of the initiated, the Hierarchy dips him three times, invoking the threefold¹ Subsistence of the Divine Blessedness at the three immersions and emersions of the initiated. The Priests then take him and entrust him to the Sponsor and guide of his introduction.

And when they, in conjunction with him, have cast over the initiated appropriate clothing, they lead him again to the Hierarchy, who, when he has sealed the man with the most Divinely operating myrrh, declares him henceforward a partaker of the most Divinely initiating Eucharist.

When he has finished these things, he elevates himself from his progression to things secondary, to the contemplation of the first; as one who at no time or manner turns himself to any other office than those which are peculiarly his own, but who, by gradual advance in Divine things, is persistently and always ranging himself under the banner of the supremely Divine Spirit.

III.—*Contemplation.*

This initiation, then, of the holy birth in God, as in symbols, has nothing unbecoming or irreverent, nor anything of sensible imagery, but enigmas of a contemplation worthy of God, bearing a likeness to natural images suitable to men. For should it appear in any particular misleading (even though the more Divine account of the religious ceremonies were passed over in silence), its Divine institution might persuade, diligently pursuing, as it does, the good life of the candidate; announcing to him, in a bodily form, the purification from every kind of evil, through a virtuous and Divine life, by the physical cleansing through the

¹ τρισσὴν ὑπόστασιν. Heb. i. 3.

agency of water. This then, even if the symbolic teaching of the religious rites had nothing more divine, would not be without religious value, as I think—introducing a discipline of a well-regulated life, whilst suggesting through the bodily purification by water, the complete purification from an evil life. Let this, then, be for the uninitiated an introductive leading of the soul; separating, as is fit, things sacred and unified from multiplicity, and apportioning our harmonious restoration to the Orders in due degree. But we who have ascended by just gradations to the contemplation of the highest mysteries, and have been religiously taught their hidden meanings, shall recognize of what moulds they are the reliefs, and of what invisible things they are the likenesses. For, as is distinctly shewn in the Treatise concerning “Intelligible and Sensible,” sensible sacred things are reliefs of things intelligible, to which they lead and shew the way. But things intelligible are an archetype and explanation of sacred things, cognizable by the senses. Let us affirm, then, that the goodness of the Divine Blessedness is always the same in condition and object, unfolding the beneficent rays of its own light upon all the intellectual visions without grudging. Either, then, the self-chosen freedom of action might turn away from spiritual light, by closing, through love of evil, the faculties for enlightenment, which naturally reside within it, and might be separated from the light present to it, and not turned from it—but illuminating it, whilst closing itself in darkness—and which generously runs to that which moves itself away. Or should anyone overstep the bounds of the vision given to itself, in due proportion, and rashly undertake to gaze upon the rays superior to its own vision, the light indeed does nothing beyond its own proper functions. But this, as imperfectly approaching the perfect, would not attain to things inappropriate to its condition, but by stupidly disregarding the due proportion, would fail through its own fault.

But as I said, the Divine Light is always unfolded for beneficent purposes to intellectual visions, and it is possible for them to seize it when it is present, and is always most ready for the distribution of its own gift, in a manner becoming the Deity. To the imitation of this, the divine Hierarch is fashioned, unfolding to all, without grudging, the luminous rays of his own divine teaching, and after the Divine example being most ready to enlighten him who comes to him, not using malice or an unholy wrath, for former backslidings or excess; but, after the example of God, always enlightening those who approach him, as becomes a Hierarch, in fitness, and order, and proportion to the aptitude of each for things Divine.

But inasmuch as the Deity is Origin of that sacred order, within which move the holy Minds who know themselves, he

who recurs to the proper view of nature will see his proper self in what he was originally, and will acquire this as the first sacred gift from his recovery to light. Now he, who has well looked upon his own proper condition with unbiased eyes, will depart from the gloomy recesses of ignorance; yet, whilst being initiated, he will not of his own accord at once desire the most perfect Oneness and participation of God, but little by little, through things present advancing to things more forward, and through these to things foremost; and having been perfected, he will be carried in order and in a heavenly manner to the Divinely supreme height. An image of this good order is the modesty of the person approaching, and his recognition of his own internal condition in providing the sponsor as leader in his approach to the Hierarchy. The Divine Blessedness receives the man thus conducted into communion with itself, and imparts to him his own light, as a kind of sign, making him also a godly sharer of the inheritance and sacred order of godly men, of which the Hierarchy's seal, given to the proselyte, is a sacred symbol; and the enrolment of the priests, as an image of salvation, registering him amongst those who are in a state of salvation, and placing in the sacred memorials his sponsor and himself—the one indeed, as a true lover and follower of a godly guide in the life-giving journey towards truth; and the other, as an unerring conductor of his neophyte to the Divinely taught directions.

But it is not possible to hold conjointly qualities thoroughly opposed, nor that a man who has had a certain fellowship with the One, should have divided lives, if he clings to the firm participation in the One. But he must be resistless and persistent as regards all separations from the uniform. This it is which the teaching of the symbols reverently intimates, by stripping the neophyte, as it were, of his former life, and unloosing to the very extremities all his habits within that life. It places him naked and barefoot, looking towards the west, and spurning, by the aversion of the hands, the participations in the gloomy evil, and breathing out, as it were, the dissimilar habit which he had acquired, and proclaiming the entire renunciation as regards everything contrary to the Divine likeness. When the man has thus become completely indomitable and separate from evil, he leads him towards the east, declaring clearly that his position and recovery will be in the Divine Light, in the complete separation from evil, receiving his sacred promises of his entire leaning towards the One, as of a man who has acquired the image of the One, through love of the truth. But it is pretty evident, as I think, to those versed in Hierarchical matters, that the spiritual acquire the unchangeableness of the Godlike habit by continuous and persistent struggles towards one; and by the entire destruction and annihilation of things contrary. For it is necessary that a

man should not only depart from every kind of evil, but he must be bravely obdurate and ever disdainful against the baneful submission to it. Nor must he at any time become remiss in his sacred love of the truth, but he must, with all his power, persistently and perpetually aspire towards it, always religiously pursuing his upward course to the more perfect mysteries of the supreme Godhead.

Now you may perceive the distinct images of these things in the religious rites performed by the Hierarchy. For the Godlike Hierarchy starts with the holy anointing, but the Priests under him complete the Divine service of the Chrism, summoning the initiated, in type, to the holy contests within which he is placed under Christ as Umpire (since as God He is Framer of the laws of contest); as wise, He placed its laws; but as generous, He fixed the awards suitable to the victors.¹ And this is yet more Divine, inasmuch as being generous, He entered the lists with them, contending, on behalf of their freedom² and victory against the power of death³ and destruction,⁴ he who is initiated will enter the contests as those of God rejoicing. But he will remain fixed in the regulations of the Wise, and will contend, according to them, without transgression, holding fast the hope of the beautiful rewards, as being enrolled under a good Lord and Leader of the contest. But when he has followed in the Divine footsteps of the first of Athletes as regards goodness, and has overthrown, in his struggles after the Divine example, the energies and impulses opposed to his deification, he dies with Christ—to speak mystically—to sin in his Baptism.

But consider this attentively, I pray, with what appropriateness the holy symbols are presented. For since death is with us, not an annihilation of being, according to the opinion of others, but the separation of things united, leading to our being invisible (the soul becoming invisible through being deprived of the body; but the body as being buried in earth, in consequence of one of its various changes, becomes invisible to the sight of man);—appropriately, then, the whole covering by water is taken as an image of death and the darkness of the tomb. The symbolical teaching, then, reveals that the man, baptized according to religious rites, imitates, so far as Divine imitation is permissible to man, by the threefold immersions in the water, the supremely Divine death of the Life-giving Jesus, Who spent three days⁵ and three nights in the tomb, in whom, according to the mystical and secret teaching of the sacred text, the Prince of this world found nothing.⁶

Next, they throw garments, white as light, over the initiated.

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 9. ² Ps. lxxxviii. 5. ³ 2 Tim. i. 10. ⁴ Ps. xvi. 10.

⁵ τριημερονύκτου ταφῆς. ⁶ John xiv. 30.

For by his manly and Godlike insensibility to contrary passions, and by his persistent inclination towards the One, the unadorned is adorned, and the shapeless acquires shape, being made brilliant by a life entirely reflecting the light.

But the most perfecting unction of the myrrh makes the man who has been perfected of good odour, for the holy perfection of the Divine birth unifies those who have been perfected with the supremely Divine Spirit. Now the spiritual indwelling which makes perfect, and of a good savour, as being unutterable, I leave to the spiritual consciousness of those who are deemed worthy of the sacred and deifying participation of the Holy Spirit within their mind.

At the conclusion of all, the Hierarch invites him who has been perfected to the most Holy Eucharist, and imparts to him the communion of the most perfecting mysteries.

CAPUT III.

Concerning those who are being initiated in the Synaxis.

Courage, then, because we have made mention of this (Eucharist) we may not pass over it to celebrate any other Hierarchical functions in preference to this. For according to our illustrious Leader, it is "initiation of initiations," and one must first give the Divine description of this, before the rest, from the inspired and sacred science of the oracles, and then be borne by the supremely Divine Spirit to its sacred contemplation. First, let us reverently consider this. For what reason that which is common to the other Hierarchical initiations, is pre-eminently attributed to this, beyond the rest. And why it is uniquely called, "Communion and Synaxis." For each consecrating function collects our divided lives into uniform deification, and gives communion and oneness with the One, by the Godlike folding together of our diversities. Now we affirm that the Perfection, which comes from the participation of the other Hierarchical symbols, springs from the supremely Divine and perfecting gifts of this Sacrament. For it scarcely ever happens that any Hierarchical initiation is celebrated without the most Divine Eucharist, at the head of the rites celebrated in each, Divinely accomplishing the collecting of the person initiated to the One, and completing his communion with God by the Divinely transmitted gift of the perfecting mysteries. If, then, each of the Hierarchical initiations, as being incomplete, will not complete our communion and our gathering to the One, even its being initiation is taken away, on account of the lack of initiation. For as the impartation of the supremely

Divine mysteries to the person being initiated is the completion and head of each initiation, naturally the Hierarchical judgment hit upon an appellation peculiar to it, from the truth of the facts. Thus, for instance, with regard to the holy initiation of the Divine birth ; since it imparts first-Light, and is supreme head of all the Divine illuminations, we celebrate the true appellation, from the enlightenment conferred. For though it be common to all Hierarchical functions to impart the gift of sacred light to those who are being initiated, yet this gave to me the power of first sight, and through the primal light of this, I was conducted to the view of the other religious rites. Having said this, let us minutely investigate and examine, as becomes the Hierarchy, the perfect administration and contemplation of the most holy initiation.

II.—*Mystery¹ of Synaxis, that is, Communion.*

The Hierarch having completed a reverent prayer, near the Divine Altar, begins with the incense and proceeds to every part of the enclosure of the sacred place ; he then returns to the Divine Altar and begins the sacred chanting of the Psalms—the whole ecclesiastical Order chanting with him the sacred language of the Psalter. Next follows the reading of the Holy Scriptures by the Leitourgoi. After these readings, the catechumens quit the sacred enclosure, as well as the energumanoi and the penitents. But those who are deemed worthy of the view and participation of the Divine Mysteries remain. Of the Leitourgoi, some stand near the closed gates of the sanctuary, whilst others perform some duty or other of their proper function. But chosen members of the diaconal Order, with the Priests, place the sacred Bread upon the Divine Altar, and the Cup of Blessing, whilst the universal Song² of Praise is sung by the whole body of the Church. Afterwards the Divine Hierarch offers a sacred prayer, and proclaims the holy Peace to all. When all have greeted each other, the mystical proclamation of the holy tablets is performed. When the Hierarch and the Priests have washed their hands in water, the Hierarch places himself in the midst of the Divine Altar. But the chosen Deacons alone, after the Priests, stand around. The Hierarch, when he has celebrated the sacred works of God, consecrates the most Divine gifts and brings to view the things celebrated, through the symbols reverently exposed.³ When he has shown the free gifts of the works of God, he himself proceeds to the sacred participation of the same, and turns and exhorts the others. When he has received and distributed the

¹ See *Traicté de la Liturgie ou S. Messe selon l'usage et la forme des apostres, et de leur disciple Saint Denys, Apostre des François, par Gilb. Genebrard, archevesque d'Aix.*

² See Appendix.

³ As in Denmark.

supremely Divine Communion, he terminates with a holy thanksgiving. Whilst the multitude have merely glanced at the Divine symbols alone, he himself is ever conducted by the Divine Spirit, as becomes a Hierarch, in the purity of a Godlike condition, to the holy archetypes of the rites performed, in blessed and intellectual visions.

III.—*Contemplation.*

After the images, I come now, most excellent son, in due order and reverence, to the Divine reality of the archetypes. To those yet being initiated, I would say this, for the harmonious guidance of their souls, that the varied and sacred composition of the symbols is not without spiritual instruction even to them, when it is merely presented superficially. For the most sacred chants and readings of the oracles teach them a discipline of a virtuous life, and what is more than this, the complete purification from destructive evil. But the most Divine, and general, and peaceful distribution of one and the same both Bread and Cup, enjoins upon them a fellowship in character as well as a fellowship in food, and recalls to their memory the most Divine Supper, and arch-symbol of the rites performed, agreeably with which the Founder of the symbols himself excludes, most justly, him who had joined in the feast of the heavenly things, not piously,¹ and in a manner dissimilar to himself; teaching at once, clearly and Divinely, that the approach to Divine mysteries with a sincere mind, confers on those who draw nigh, the participation in a gift similar to their own character. Let us, then, as I said, leave behind these things, beautifully depicted upon the propylea of the innermost shrine, as being sufficient for those who are yet unfit for contemplation, and let us proceed from the effects to the cause; and then, Jesus lighting the way, let us view our holy Synaxis and the comely contemplation of the spiritual mysteries, which makes manifest the blessed beauty of the archetypes. But, oh, most Divine and holy initiation, uncover the folds of the dark mysteries, enveloping thee in symbols. Be manifest to us in thy bright glory, and fill our intellectual visions with unique and unconcealed light.

We must, then, in my opinion, pass within the All Holy Mysteries, after we have laid bare the spiritual conception of the first of the images, to gaze upon its Godlike beauty, and contemplate with a godly mind the Hierarch, as he goes with fragrance from the Divine Altar to the furthestmost bounds of the holy place, and is again, at the end, restored to the same. For the Blessedness, supremely Divine above all, although through

¹ John xiii. 11. St. Cyprian thought Judas was excluded; St. Augustine not. See Cornelius a Lapide on John xiii. 11.

Divine goodness it goes forth to the communion of those who participate in itself, yet it never goes outside its essential unmoved position and steadfastness.

Further, it gives to all, according to their capacity, its Godlike illuminations; always self-centred, and in no wise moved from its own proper identity. In the same manner the Divine initiation of the Synaxis, although it has an unique and simple and enfolded origin, is multiplied, out of love towards man, into the holy variety of the symbols, and travels through the whole range of Divine imagery; yet uniformly it is again collected from these into its own proper Oneness, and unifies those who are being reverently conducted towards it. In the same Godlike manner the Divine Hierarchy, even when he benignly deposes to his subordinates his own unique Hierarchical science, by using the multiplicity of Divine enigmas; yet again, as absolute, and not to be held in check by smaller things, he is restored to his own supreme dignity without diminution. And when he has himself made the spiritual entry to the Oneness of himself, he sees clearly the uniform reasons of the religious rites, as he makes the goal of his philanthropic progress to things secondary, the more Divine return to things first. The chanting of the Psalms, which is co-essential to almost all the Hierarchical mysteries, was not likely to be separated from the chief of all. For all holy and inspired Scriptures set forth for those meet for deification, either the originated Beginning¹ and Order from God of things created; or the Priesthood² and polity of the Law; or the distributions³ and possessions of the inheritance of the people of God; or the understanding of sacred judges,⁴ or wise kings, or inspired Priests; or philosophy⁵ of men of old time, indomitable⁶ in the endurance of evils springing up in multitude and measure; or the treasures of wisdom for the conduct of life; or odes or inspired⁷ images of Divine Loves; or the prophetic predictions⁸ of things to come; or⁹ the God-Incarnate works of Jesus¹⁰; or the administrations¹¹ and sacred doctrines of His Apostles given by God for the imitation of God; or the hidden¹² and mystic range of view of the beloved and Divinely sweet disciple; or the supermundane theology of Jesus. These, too, are embedded in the holy and Godlike instructions of the initiations. But the sacred representations of the Divine odes, whose purpose is to celebrate the words and works of God throughout, and to praise the holy words and works of godly men, forms an universal Hymn Narrative of things Divine; which

¹ Genesis i. ² Leviticus and Deut. ³ Numbers. ⁴ Judges and Kings.

⁵ Proverbs and Wisdom. ⁶ Job. ⁷ Canticles. ⁸ Prophets.

⁹ τὰς ἀνθρῳκὰς ἰσθῶν θεωρησίας. ¹⁰ Gospels. ¹¹ Acts and Epistles.

¹² Either Gospel or Apocalypse of St. John. If latter, it was added in revision of works, A.D. 96-98.

makes in those who reverently recite it a habit suitable for the reception and distribution of every Hierarchical mystery.

When, then, the universal melody of the holy Psalms has harmonized the spiritual condition of our souls to the things which are presently to be celebrated, and by the unison of the Divine odes, as one and concordant chorus of things Divine, has established concord towards things Divine, and ourselves¹ and one another, the things more compounded and obscure in the spiritual language of the mystic Psalms are expanded by the most holy lections of the inspired compositions, through more full and distinct images and narratives. He who devoutly contemplates these will perceive the uniform and one concordant breathing as being moved by One, the supremely Divine Spirit. Hence, naturally, in the history of the world, after the more ancient² tradition—the new Covenant is proclaimed. This inspired order of the Hierarchy teaches this—that the One affirmed the Divine works of Jesus as to come; the other accomplished them, in fact. And as that described the truth in figures, this, on the other hand, shewed it present. For the accomplishment, in fact, of this established the truth of the predictions of that, and the work of God is a consummation of the Word of God.

Those who in every respect have no ear for the sacred initiations do not even recognize their images—unblushingly rejecting the saving revelation of the Divine Birth, and realizing to their destruction the words, “Thy ways I do not wish to know.”³

Now the custom of the holy Hierarchy permits the catechumens and the penitents to hear the sacred chanting of the Psalms, and the inspired reading of the all Holy Scriptures; but it does not invite these to the next religious services and contemplations, but only the perfect visions of the perfected. For the Divine-like Hierarchy is full of reverent justice, and distributes savingly to each, according to their due, the harmonious participation of each in things Divine, in measure and proportion and due time. The lowest rank, then, is assigned to the catechumens, for they are without participation and instruction, in any of the Hierarchical functions; not even having the existence in God after Divine Birth, but are being brought to⁴ Birth by the paternal instructions, and moulded by life-giving formations towards the blessed acquisition of their first life and first light, from Birth in God. As, then, children after the flesh, if whilst immature and unformed they should anticipate their proper delivery, as untimely born and abortions, would fall to the earth without life and without light; and no one, in his senses, would say from what he saw, that they

¹ Republic, liber iv. ad finem. Dulac, p. 426-7. ² The Law. ³ Job xxi. 14.

⁴ See Plato, Theet. i. 114, 115. Dulac 429.

were brought to the light, released from the darkness of the womb (for the medical authority learned in the functions of the body would say that light operates on things receptive of light), thus also science, which knows all about religious rites, brings these first to delivery by the preparatory nourishment of the formative and life-giving instructions. But when it has made their condition ripe for Divine Birth, it gives to them savingly, in due order, the participation in things luminous and perfecting. But at present it separates things perfect from things imperfect, consulting the good order of Divine things, and the delivery and life of the catechumens in a Godlike order of the sacred rites.

As for the multitude of the energumanoi, that indeed is unholy, but it is second above the catechumens, which is lowest. Nor is that on a par, as I think, with the altogether uninstructed and entirely uncommunicated in the Divine initiations, for it has received a certain participation in the most holy functions, but is yet held in chains by contrary qualities, whether enchantments or terrors. Now, as regards these, the sight and participation in the holy mysteries is withdrawn, and very properly. For if it be true that the altogether godly man, the worthy partaker of the Divine mysteries, who is carried to the very summit of the Divine likeness, to the best of his powers, in complete and most perfect deification, who does not follow the things of the flesh, beyond the most necessary requirements of nature, nor these, if it should happen to be superfluous; who will be, at the same time, a temple and a follower, according to his ability, of the supremely Divine Spirit, in the highest deification, labouring to add like to like. Such an one as this, would not be possessed by opposing phantoms or fears, but will laugh them to scorn, and when they approach will throw them and put them to flight, and will act rather than persuade. And besides this, by the passionless and indomitableness of his own character, he will be seen to be a physician to others for similar possessions.¹ But I think further, yea, rather, I know certainly, that the most clear decision of the Hierarchy holds that they are rather possessed with a most detestable possession, whoever, by departing from the Godlike life, become of one mind and one condition with destructive demons; turning themselves from things that really are, and undying possessions, and everlasting pleasures, for the sake of the most base folly, destructive to themselves, by desiring and pursuing the earthly variableness, vexed by many passions, and the perishable and corrupting pleasures, and the unstable comfort in things foreign to their nature, not real but seeming. These first, then, and more properly than those, were shut out by the discriminating authority of the Deacon, for it is not permitted to

¹ ἐνεργημάτων.

them to have part in any other holy function, than the teaching of the oracles, in order to turn them to better things. For if the Divine Service of the heavenly mysteries excludes from view the penitents and those who have already approached it, not permitting anything not completely perfect to draw nigh, but proclaims this, in all sincerity, that "I am invisible, and incommunicable to those who are in any respect imperfectly weak as regards the attainment of the highest degree of the Divine Likeness" (for that most impartial voice scares away also those who cannot be associated with the worthy partakers of the Divine mysteries), how much more then will the multitude of those who are under the sway of their passions, be unholy and alien from every view of, and participation in, the holy mysteries. After the uninstructed and uninitiated in the mysteries have been put outside the Divine Temple, and the holy service above their capacity, and with them the apostates from the religious life, and next, those who through want of manliness are easily affected by the fears and fancies of contrary influences, as not having reached the stability and activity of a Godlike condition, through the persistent and indomitable inclination towards godliness; then in addition to these, those who have separated indeed from the contrary life, but have not yet been cleansed from its imaginations by a habit and love, godly and pure; and next, those who are not altogether uniform, and to use an expression of the Law, "entirely without spot and blemish;" then the sacred ministers of sacred things, who love to gaze upon sacred rites, contemplate in all purity the most holy mystery, and celebrate in an universal Hymn of Praise the Author and Giver of all good, from Whom the mysteries were exhibited to us, as images of salvation, which divinely work the sacred deification of the initiated. Now that Hymn some indeed call a Hymn of Praise, others the symbol of worship, but others, as I think more Divinely, a Hierarchical thanksgiving, as giving a summary of the holy gifts which come to us from God. For it seems to me a systematic record¹ of all the works of God, on our behalf, celebrated in song, which, after it had fixed our being and life after the pattern of Divine goodness, and moulded the Divine likeness in ourselves to beautiful archetypes, placed us in possession of a more Divine condition and elevation. But when it witnessed the dearth of Divine gifts, which came upon us by our heedlessness, deigned to call us back to our original condition by the restoration of our blessings, and by the complete assumption of ours, to make good the most perfect impartation of His own, and thus to give to us a participation in God and Divine things.

When the Divine goodness has thus been religiously celebrated,

¹ Note. Appendix, Liturgy of Dionysius.

the Divine Bread is presented, veiled, and likewise the Cup of Blessing. The most Divine salutation is devoutly performed, and the instructive and heavenly proclamation of the holy names written on the tablets. For it is not possible to be collected to the One, and to partake of the peaceful Oneness of the One, when people are divided amongst themselves. For if being illuminated by the contemplation and knowledge of the One, we would be united to an uniform and Divine agreement, we must not permit ourselves to descend to divided lusts, from which are formed earthly enmities, envious and passionate, against that which is according to nature. This unified and undivided life is, in my opinion, established by the Divine Service of the salutation of peace, which roots like to like, and separates the Divine and unified visions from things divided. The reading of the holy tablets, after the salutation, proclaims those who have passed through life holily and have reached the term of a virtuous life without faltering, urging and conducting us to their blessed condition and Divine inheritance through their example. Further, it announces them as living, and, as the Word of God says, "not dead, but as having passed from death to a most divine life."¹ But observe that they are enrolled in the holy memorials, not as though the Divine memory were represented under the figure of a memorial, after the manner of men; but, as one might say, with reverence towards God, within the cherished and unfailing knowledge in God of those who have been perfected in the likeness of God. For "He knoweth," say the oracles, "those that are His,"² and, "dear, in the sight of the Lord, is the death of His saints."³ "Death of saints" being said, instead of perfection in holiness. And bear this religiously in mind, that after the august symbols, through which Christ is signified and partaken, have been placed on the Divine Altar, the reading of the register of the holy persons immediately follows, signifying their inseparable conjunction with His celestial and sacred Oneness. When these things have been religiously performed, according to the regulations prescribed, the Hierarch, standing before the most holy symbols, washes his hands with water, together with the reverend order of the Priests. Because, as the oracles testify, when a man has been washed, he needs no other washing, except that of his extremities.⁴ Through this extreme cleansing, in a sanctified habit of the Divine Likeness, whilst advancing in a goodly manner to things secondary, he will be resistless and free, as altogether uniform, and by turning himself uniquely to the One, he will make his return without spot and blemish, as preserving the fulness and entirety of the Divine likeness. There was even the sacred laver, as we have said, in the Hierarchy of the Law.⁵

¹ 1 John iii. 14. ² 2 Tim. ii. 19. ³ Ps. cxvi. 15. ⁴ Jo. xiii. 10. ⁵ Deut. xxi. 6.

But now the cleansing of the hands of the Hierarch and the Priests suggests that. For it behoves those who approach the most hallowed service to be purified even to the remotest imaginations of the soul, and to approach, as far as possible, through likeness to itself. For thus they will shed more visibly the glory of the Divine manifestations, since the celestial rays permit their own splendour to pass more thoroughly and brilliantly into the brightness of mirrors like themselves. Further, the cleansing of the Hierarch and the Priests to their very extremities, takes place before the most holy symbols, as in the presence of Christ, Who surveys our innermost thoughts, and because the utmost purification is enjoined under his most penetrating scrutiny and just and unflinching judgment. Thus the Hierarch becomes one with things Divine, and when he has celebrated the holy works of God, he consecrates the most Divine symbols, and brings them to view whilst their praises are sung.

We will now explain, to the best of our ability, the works of God, of which we have spoken. For we are not competent to extol the praises of all, much less to know accurately and to reveal their mysteries to others. But whatever has been sung and religiously performed by godly Hierarchs, after the oracles, this we will say, as far as permissible, invoking the Hierarchical inspiration to our aid. Immediately after our human nature had thoughtlessly fallen from the good things of God, it was seized by a life vexed with many passions, and, at last, a ruinous death. For, as a natural consequence, the pernicious departure from genuine goodness, and the transgression of the sacred Law laid down in Paradise, delivered him, when fretted with the life-giving yoke, to his own downward inclinations, and the enticing and hostile wiles of the adversary—the adversaries of the good things of God. Hence, he pitiably exchanged for the eternal, the mortal. As then the human race had its own origin in corrupted generations, the end naturally corresponded with the beginning. Now as mankind had willingly fallen from the Divine and conducted life, they were carried to the opposite extremity—the variableness of many passions. Whilst going astray, and turned aside from the strait way leading to the true God, and being subject to a destructive and evil-working diversity, they naturally forgot that they were worshipping, not gods, or friends, but enemies. Now when these had used the human race harshly, according to their own cruelty, it fell into danger of annihilation and destruction. But the boundless lovingkindness of the supremely Divine goodness towards man, did not, in its benevolence, withdraw from us its spontaneous forethought, but taking upon itself a real participation of our entire nature, without sin,¹ and having made itself one

¹ Heb. iv. 15.

with our infirmity, with the unconfused possession of its own properties, entirely without flaw, it gave to us, as members of the same family, communion with itself henceforward, and proclaimed us partakers of his own good things; having, as the secret teaching holds, loosed the power¹ of the rebellious diversity which was against us; not by force, as having the upper hand, but according to the Divine saying, mystically transmitted to us, "in judgment and righteousness."²

Our condition, then, he benevolently changed to the contrary. For the darkness of our mind he filled with perfect and most Divine light, and adorned that which was without likeness with Godlike beauties. The tabernacle³ of our soul, which was all but fallen down, he liberated from most damnable passions and destructive stains through a perfected salvation, and exhibited to us a supermundane elevation, and a Divine course of life in our assimilation to his own holiness, as far as permissible. But how could the Divine imitation otherwise become ours unless the memory of the most holy works of God were perpetually renewed by the holy teaching and service of the Hierarchy. This, then, we do, as the oracles say, "for its remembrance."⁴ Wherefore the Divine Hierarchy, standing before the Divine Altar, celebrates the holy works of God, which proceed from the most godly forethought of Jesus on our behalf, which He completed for the salvation of our race, by the good pleasure of the most Holy Father in the Holy Spirit, as the Divine Word affirms.⁵ When he has celebrated their majesty, and gazed, with intellectual vision, upon the spiritual contemplation, he proceeds to the Divine service symbolical of them—and this, as transmitted from God. Hence, after the sacred praise of the works of God, he deprecates his own unworthiness for a service above his merits. First, reverently saying aloud, "Thou hast said, Do this for My remembrance"⁶—then,⁷ having asked to become meet for this holy office of Divine imitation, and to consecrate the Divine symbols, by being made like to Christ Himself, and to distribute them in perfect holiness; and that those who shall partake of those holy mysteries may receive them religiously, he consecrates the most Divine symbols, and brings the mysteries to view through the reverent exposition of the symbols, while their praises are being sung. For when he has unveiled the veiled and undivided Bread, and divided it into many, and has apportioned the Oneness of the Cup to all, he symbolically multiplies and distributes the unity—completing in these a most holy Divine Service. For the unity and simplicity and hiddenness of Jesus, the Divinely supreme Word, by His becoming Man amongst us, came forth,

¹ Ps. lxxiv. 14. ² Ps. xcvi. 2. ³ Plato Crat. i. 295. ⁴ Luke xxii. 19.

⁵ Ps. xl. 6-8. ⁶ Luke xxii. 19. ⁷ Prayer of humble access.

out of goodness and love towards man, to the compound and visible, and benevolently devised the communion which makes us one with Himself, having united in the highest degree our lowliness to His own Godhead ; if indeed we have been fitted to Him, as members to a body, after the identity of a blameless and Divine life ; and have not, by being killed through destructive passions, become unsuited and unattached and unyoked, as regards the godly and healthy members. For if we aspire to communion with Him, we must keep our eye fixed upon His most godly Life in the flesh, and we must retrace our path to the Godlike and blameless habit of mind by being made like It in its holy sinlessness. For thus He will communicate to us an harmonious likeness to Himself.

The Hierarch makes known these things to those who are living religiously by bringing the veiled gifts to view, by dividing their unity into multiplicity, and making the recipients partakers in them, by the utmost Oneness of the things distributed, with those who receive them. For he depicts in these things, visibly, by bringing to Jesus, the Christ, our spiritual life, as in images, coming as He does from the Hiddenness of the Divine Father ; and out of love to man, moulded into our likeness from us, by the perfect and unconfused incarnation in our race, and advancing to the divided condition of ourselves without divergence from His essential unity ; and calling the human race, through this beneficent love of man, into communion with Himself and His own good things, provided we are united to His most Divine Life by assimilation to it, as far as permissible. Thus in very truth we shall have been completed as partakers of God and Divine things. Having received and distributed the Divine Communion, he terminates with the singing of the holy thanksgiving, in which the whole body of the Church take part. For the communion precedes the distribution—and the reception of the mysteries the mystical impartation. For this is the regulation and order of the Divine Mysteries, that the reverend Leader should first partake and be filled with the gifts to be imparted through him, from God, to others, and that thus he should impart to others also. Wherefore, those who rashly content themselves with Divine instructions in preference to a life and condition agreeable to the same are profane and entirely alien from the sacred regulation established. For, as in the case of the bright shining of the sun, the more delicate and luminous substances being first filled with the brilliancy flowing into them, impart their overflowing light to things near them ; thus it is not tolerable that one who has not become altogether Godlike in his whole character, and who has not been proved to govern by the Divine influence and judgment, should become a Leader to others in what is altogether Divine. When the whole order of the Priests have been collected together in

sacerdotal order, and have communicated in the most Divine mysteries, they finish with a holy thanksgiving, after they have recognized and celebrated the gifts of the works of God, according to their degree. So that those who have not partaken or recognized the Divine mysteries would not come to thanksgiving; although the most Divine gifts are, in their essential nature, worthy of thanksgiving. But, as I said, not having wished even to look at the Divine gifts from their inclination to evil, they have remained throughout unblessed, as regards the boundless gifts of the works of God. "Taste and see," say the oracles, for, by the sacred instruction in Divine things, the instructed recognize their munificent gifts; and by gazing upon their most Divine height and breadth in the participation, they extol the supercelestial beneficent works of the Godhead.

CAPUT IV.

Concerning the initiatory rites in Myrrh, and those who are perfected in the same.

So great and so beautiful are the spiritual visions of the most holy Synaxis, which, as we have often said, accomplish by religious rites our participation in and collection towards the One. But there is another perfecting Service that occupies the same rank as this, which our Leaders name Initiation of Myrrh. By contemplating its parts in due order, after the rule of sacred images, we shall thus be borne, by religious contemplations, to its Oneness through its parts.

II.—*Mystery of Consecration of Myrrh.*

In the same way as in the Synaxis, the orders of the imperfect are dismissed, that is, after the Bishop has made the whole circuit of the temple, attended with fragrant incense, and the chanting of the Psalms, and the reading of the most Divine Lections. Then the Hierarch takes the Myrrh and places it upon the Divine Altar, veiled under twelve sacred wings, whilst all cry aloud, with a devout voice, the sacred melody of the inspiration of the God-rapt Prophets. When the Bishop has finished the prayer offered over it, he uses it in the most holy perfectings of things that are hallowed, for the completion of almost every Hierarchical function.

III.—*Contemplation.*

The introductory teaching, then, of this most perfecting function, through the rites performed respecting the Divine Myrrh, shews this, in my judgment, that that which is holy and of sweet savour

in the minds of devout men, is covered, as with a veil, since it is Divinely enjoined upon holy men, to keep their beautiful and well-savoured likeness to the virtue of the hidden God, not made known for the purpose of vain glory. For the hidden and sweet-savoured comeliness of God is undefiled, and is spiritually manifested to the spiritual contemplators only, desiring to keep the unsullied images of virtue in the soul like unto itself. For when a man gazes, with undistracted vision, upon that spiritual and fragrant beauty, the unportrayed and well imitated image of Godlike virtue moulds and fashions itself to a most glorious imitation. And, as in material images, if the artist look without distraction upon the archetypal form, not drawn aside to any other sight, or in any way distracted, he will duplicate, if I may so speak, the very thing that is being engraved, whatever it may be, and will shew the reality in the likeness, and the archetype in the image—each in each, except as regards difference of substance. In the same way, to copyists who love the beautiful in mind, the persistent and unflinching contemplation of the sweet-savoured and hidden beauty, will confer the unerring and most Godlike appearance.¹ Naturally, then, the divine copyists, who unflinchingly mould their own spiritual image after the celestial sweet savour and spiritual comeliness, perform none of their Divinely imitated virtues “to be seen of men,”² as the Divine text expresses it. But they reverently contemplate the most holy things of the Church, veiled in the holy Myrrh, as in a figure. Wherefore, whilst religiously concealing that which is holy and most Divine in virtue, within their Godlike and God-engraved mind, they look to the archetypal conception alone. For not only are they blind to things dissimilar, but neither do they condescend themselves to gaze upon them. Wherefore, as becomes their character, they do not love things which merely seem to be good and just, but such as really are so. Nor do they look to a mere appearance, upon which the multitude unreasonably congratulate themselves; but, after the Divine example, distinguishing the good or evil as it is in itself, they are Divine images of the Supremely Divine Suavity, which, having its true savour within itself, does not turn itself, to the anomalously seeming of the multitude, but moulds its genuineness to true images of itself.

Come, then, since we have viewed the exterior comeliness of this Divine Service, beautiful throughout, let us look to its more godly beauty. Whilst itself, by itself, has uncovered the veils thrown around it, let us contemplate its blessed radiance, shedding its bright beams openly around, and filling us with its fragrance revealed to spiritual men. For the open consecration of the Myrrh is neither shut out from, nor invisible to, those who surround

¹ Plato, Rep. i. 6—ii. 116. ² Matt. xxiii. 5.

the Hierarch—but on the contrary is extended to them. But as its contemplation is above the reach of the many, they reverently conceal it; and by Hierarchical direction, it is kept from the gaze of the multitude.

For the splendour of things all holy sheds its light clearly and without symbol to men inspired, as being congenial to the spiritual, and perfumes their intellectual perceptions without concealment. But it does not advance in the same way to the inferior. Further, the deep contemplators of the spiritual conceal it under the enigmas of the wings, without ostentation, so that it may not be defiled by the impure. Through these sacred enigmas the well-ordered ranks of the subordinate are conducted to the degree of holiness compatible with their powers. The holy consecration, then, which we are now extolling, is, as I said, of the most perfecting order and capacity of the Hierarchical functions. Wherefore our Divine Leaders arranged this as being of the same rank and effect, with the holy perfecting of the Synaxis, with the same figures, for the most part, and mystical regulations and lections. And you may see in like manner the Hierarch bearing forward the sweet perfume from the more holy place into the sacred precincts beyond—and teaching, by the return to the same, that the participation in things Divine comes to all holy persons according to their fitness, but that it remains undiminished and altogether unmoved, and stands unchangeably in its identity with a Divine fixity. In the same way the hymns and readings of the lections bring to birth those not yet perfect for the life bringing adoption of sons. They also form a religious inclination in those who are possessed with accursed spirits. They dispel the opposing fear and effeminacy from those possessed by a spirit of unmanliness; shewing to them, according to their capacity, the highest pinnacle of the Godlike habit and power, by following which they will, the rather, scare away the opposing forces, and will take the lead in healing others; and, following the example of God, whilst unmoved from their own proper gifts, they will not only be active against those opposing fears, but will themselves give activity to others. They also impart to those who have departed from evil to a religious mind, a sacred persistence, so that they should not be again enslaved by evil. They purify completely those who need to become altogether pure. They lead the holy to their own Divine likeness, and contemplation, and communion. They also establish those who are entirely holy in blessed and spiritual visions, completing their uniform likeness of the One, and making them One. What, then, shall I say further? Is it not those orders that we have mentioned, which are not entirely pure, that the present religious service excludes without distinction, in the same way as the Synaxis, so that it is viewed by the holy alone, in figures, and is con-

templated and ministered by the perfectly holy alone, without symbols, through instructions given by the Hierarchy? Now this has already been so often mentioned that it is superfluous, as I think, to recur to the same statements. Those, then, who see with a Divine vision may appropriately contemplate the Hierarchy, holding the Divine Myrrh, veiled under twelve wings, and devoutly completing the holy service of consecration. Let us then affirm that the composition of the Myrrh is a combination of sweet-smelling materials, which has in itself abundantly fragrant qualities, with which those who partake become perfumed, in proportion to the degree in which they partake of its sweet savour. Now we are persuaded that the Supremely Divine Jesus is superessentially of good savour, filling the spiritual part of ourselves with a Divine sweetness, by spiritual bequests. For if the reception of the sensible odours makes us feel joyous, and nourishes, with much sweetness, the sensitive organs of our nostrils—at least, if they be sound and well apportioned to the sweet savour—in the same way, anyone might say that our spiritual faculties, being soundly disposed with regard to the subjection to evil, in the strength of the distinguishing faculty implanted in us by nature, receive the sweet savour from God, and are filled with a holy comfort and most Divine nourishment, in accordance with Divinely fixed proportions and the suitable turning of the mind towards the Divine. Wherefore, the symbolical composition of the Myrrh, as expressing in form things that are formless, depicts to us Jesus Himself, as being a well-spring of the wealth of the Divine sweetness,¹ distributing in degrees fixed by God, to the most Godlike of spiritual persons, the most Divine perfumes; from which the minds, satiated with a most comforting joy, and filled with holy receptions, enjoy a spiritual nourishment, by the entrance of the savoury² gifts into their spiritual nature, according to a Divine participation. But it is evident, as I think, that the distribution of the primal perfume to the Beings above ourselves, as being more Divine, is, as it were, nearer, and manifests and distributes itself better to their luminous transparency, and overflows without stint the healthy capacity of their minds for its reception, and enters them much more abundantly. But as regards the subordinate minds, which are not so receptive, it piously conceals the highest vision and participation, and is distributed in a Divinely fixed proportion, in fragrance corresponding to the recipients. Amongst the holy Beings, then, who are above us, the highest exalted order of the Seraphin is represented under the figure of the twelve wings, as established and fixed around Jesus, giving itself to the most blessed contemplation as far as permissible, and filled with spiritual distributions through holy receptions, and, to

¹ Cant. i. 3.² 2 Cor. ii. 14.

speaking after the manner of men, crying aloud, with never silent lips, the frequent Hymn of Praise.¹

For the sacred knowledge of the celestial minds is both untiring and possesses the Divine love without intermission, and is at the same time superior to all baseness and forgetfulness. Whence, as I think, that phrase, "unceasing cry," suggests their perpetual and persistent science, and conception of things Divine, with full determination and thanksgiving. Now we have, as I think, sufficiently contemplated, in the description of the Heavenly Hierarchy, the distinctive features of the incorporeal Seraphin, Divinely described in the Scriptures, under sensible figures, explanatory of the spiritual Beings; and we have made them evident to your intellectual vision. Nevertheless, as they who stand reverently around the Hierarchy, reflect that same order, the highest of all in science, we will now view their most Godlike glory with unearthly visions.

Their numberless faces then, and many feet, demonstrate, as I think, their property of viewing the Divine illumination from many sides, and their conception of the good things of God, as ever active and abundantly receptive. But the sixfold arrangement of the wings, of which the Scripture speaks, does not, as I think, denote a sacred number, but that the first, and second, and last of the spiritual and Godlike powers of the highest existence and Order around God are elevating, and entirely free, and supermundane. Hence the most holy wisdom of the Scriptures, when Divinely describing the formation of the wings, places the wings around the heads,² and the middle, and their feet, suggesting their complete covering with wings, and their faculty of leading to the Truly Existing.

But if they cover their heads and their feet, and fly by their middle wings only; bear this religiously in mind, that the Order, so far exalted above the highest Beings, is circumspect respecting the more lofty and deep of its conceptions, and raises itself, in due proportion by its middle wings, to the vision of God; placing its own proper life under the Divine yokes, and by these is well directed to the knowledge of itself. But as regards the statement of Holy Scripture, that "one cried out to the other," that shows, I think, that they impart to each other ungrudgingly their own visions of God. And this we should deem worthy of religious recollection, that the Hebrew word in the Holy Scriptures names the most holy Seraphin, by an explanatory appellation signifying their glowing and seething, in a Divine and ever moving life.

If, then, as those who have learned Hebrew say, the most

¹ Isaiah vi. 3.

² Isaiah vi. 2.

Divine Seraphin are named by the Word of God, "glowing" and "heating," by a name expressive of their essential condition, they possess, according to the symbolical description of the Divine Myrrh, ever moving powers, calling into evidence its distribution of exhilarating perfumes. For the incomprehensible, benign Being loves to be moved by the glowing and most pure minds into manifestation, and imparts its most Divine breathings in cheerful distributions to those who thus devoutly call it forth. Thus the most exalted Order of celestial Beings did not fail to recognize ¹ the supremely Divine Jesus when He descended for the purpose of being sanctified, but contemplates Him lowering Himself in our nature through Divine and inexpressible goodness; and when it had seen Him sanctified in a manner befitting man, from the Father ² and Himself ³ and the Holy Spirit, ⁴ recognized their own supreme Head as being essentially unchanged in whatever He did, according to His supreme Deity. Hence the teaching of the sacred symbols places the Seraphin near the Divine Myrrh when it is being consecrated, recognizing and describing the Christ as unchanged in the complete incarnation amongst us in the truth of our nature. And what is still more Divine, it uses the Divine Myrrh for the perfecting of every religious function, distinctly shewing, according to the Divine saying, the sanctified Sanctifier as always the same in Himself throughout the whole course of His Divine Beneficence. Wherefore the completing gift and grace of the Divine regeneration is completed in the Divine perfecting of the Myrrh. Hence, as I think, the Hierarch pouring the Myrrh upon the purifying font, in the form of a cross, brings to view for contemplative eyes the Jesus descending to death itself through the cross, ⁵ for our birth in God, and drawing up from the jaws of a destructive death, by the same Divine and resistless descent, those who, according to the mysterious saying, "are baptized into His death," ⁶ from the former gulf of a destructive ⁷ death, and renewing them to a godly and eternal existence. ⁸

But further, the perfecting unction of the Myrrh gives to him who has been initiated in the most sacred initiation of the birth in God, the indwelling of the supremely Divine Spirit; the sacred imagery of the symbols suggesting, as I think, the gift of the Divine Spirit, by Him Who for our sakes has been sanctified as man, by the Divine Spirit, in an unaltered condition of His essential Godhead. And bear this also most religiously in mind, that the Law of the most holy completion completes the sacred consecration of the Divine Altar by pure effusions of the most holy Myrrh. But the work of God, at once supercelestial and

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 16. ² John x. 36. ³ John xvii. 19. ⁴ Rom. i. 4. ⁵ Phil. ii. 8.

⁶ Rom. vi. 3.

⁷ Rom viii. 2.

⁸ Rom. vi. 4.

supernatural, is head and being and perfecting power of all the deifying holiness within ourselves. For if our most Divine Altar is Jesus—the supremely Divine sanctification of the godly minds—in Whom, according to the saying, “being sanctified and mystically offered as a whole burnt offering, we have access,”¹ let us gaze with celestial eyes upon the self-same Altar (in Whom things being perfected are perfected and sanctified), as being perfected from the self-same most Divine Myrrh. For the all-pure Jesus sanctifies Himself on our behalf and fills us with every purification, since the things completed² in Him during the Divine economy, pass afterwards in their beneficent effects to us, as children of God. Hence, as I think, the Divine Leaders of our Hierarchy in conformity with an Hierarchical conception received from God, have wisely named this august service, completing of Myrrh—from “being completed.” As one might say, completing of God—celebrating its Divine completing work in both senses. For His completion is both the sanctification of Himself as Man, on our behalf, and the completing and sanctifying of all things, by His power as God. As for the sacred melody of the inspiration of the God-rapt Prophets, it is called by those who know Hebrew, “Praise of God,” or “Praise ye the Lord.” Since then, every Divine manifestation and work of God is religiously portrayed in the varied composition of the Hierarchical symbols, it is not unbefitting to mention the Divinely moved song of the Prophets, for it teaches at once, distinctly and reverently, that the beneficent works of the Divine Goodness are worthy of devout praise.

CAPUT V.

Concerning sacerdotal consecrations.

Such, then, is the most Divine perfecting work of the Myrrh. But it may be opportune, after these Divine functions, to set forth the sacerdotal Orders and elections themselves; their powers, and energies, and consecrations, and the triad of the superior Orders under them; in order that the harmonious Order of our Hierarchy may be demonstrated as entirely rejecting and excluding the disordered, the unregulated, and the confused; and, at the same time, manifesting the regulated, and ordered, and well-established in the gradations of the sacred orders within itself. Now we have shewn, as I think, in the Hierarchy already celebrated by us, the threefold division of every Hierarchy—when we affirmed, as our sacred tradition holds, that every Hierarchical function is divided

¹ Eph. iii. 12.

² Observe the doctrine of the Atonement.

into (1) the most Divine initiations, and (2) the inspired experts and teachers of them, (3) and those who are being religiously initiated by them.

Therefore the most Divine Hierarchy of the heavenly Beings has for its initiation its own proper and most immaterial conception of God and things Divine, according to its capacity, and a complete likeness to God, and a persistent habit of imitating God, as far as permissible. But its illuminators and leaders to this sacred consecration are the very first Beings around God. For these generously and proportionately transmit to the sacred ranks, subordinate to themselves, the knowledge given to themselves, and always deifying, by the self-subsisting and supreme Deity, who governs the Divine minds that impart wisdom to man. But the ranks who are subordinate to the first Beings are, and are truly called, the initiated orders, as being religiously conducted through those to the deifying illumination of the supreme Deity. After this the heavenly and supermundane Hierarchy, the supreme Deity gave the Hierarchy under the Law, for the purpose of imparting its most holy gifts, for the benefit of our race, as it were, to children,¹ giving an apportioned light, so as not to wound weak visions; and copies,² far from the Archetypes, and hard to understand³; and types, whose hidden meaning was not easily discerned.⁴ Now the initiation of the Hierarchy under the Law is the restitution to spiritual worship.⁵ Our conductors to this were men religiously instructed as to the holy tabernacle⁶ by Moses, the first initiator and Leader of the Hierarchs under the Law. Now, in reference to this tabernacle, when describing, for purposes of instruction, the Hierarchy under the Law, he called all the sacred services of the Law an image of the type shewn to him in Mount Sinai.⁷ But "initiated" are those who are being conducted from the symbols of the Law, in proportion to their capacity, to a more perfect revelation. The Word of God calls our Hierarchy the more perfect revelation, naming it a fulfilment⁸ of that, and a holy inheritance. It is both celestial and legal, participating in common, as a mean between extremes—with the former by spiritual contemplations, and with the latter, because it is variegated by sensible signs, and through these is reverently led to the Divine. There is likewise a threefold division of the Hierarchy, which is divided into the most holy services of the initiations, and into the Godlike ministers of holy things, and those who are being conducted by them, according to their capacity, to the holy rites.

But each of the threefold divisions of our Hierarchy, like that

¹ Gal. iv. 3. ² Heb. x. 1. ³ Num. xii. 8. ⁴ Rom. ii. 20. ⁵ John iv. 23.

⁶ Heb. ix. 11. ⁷ Ex. xxv. 40. ⁸ Matt. v. 17.

of the Law, and of the Hierarchy which is more Divine than ours, is arranged as first, middle, and last in rank, each carefully guarding the proportion of religious rites, and the well-ordered fellowship which keeps in harmonious order and binds all things together. The most holy service of the initiations, regards the sacred cleansing of the imperfect as a first Godlike rank—the illuminating instruction of those who have been purified as the middle—the perfecting of those who have been instructed in an exact knowledge of their own revelations as the last, which is a summary of the two former. The Order of Ministers, in the first rank, cleanses the uninitiated through the initiations. In the middle rank, it imparts light to those who have been cleansed; and in the last, and highest of the ministering ranks, it completes those who have been made partakers of the light, by the perfect skill in the illuminations contemplated. The first rank¹ of those who are being initiated is that of those who are being purified; the next is that of those who are being illuminated after purification, who contemplate some sacred mysteries²; but the last, which is more Divine than the others, is that which is being illuminated with the most perfecting science of the sacred illuminations contemplated. The threefold rank of the holy service of the initiations is celebrated, since the Birth in God is exhibited in the oracles, as a purification and light-giving illumination; and the initiation of the Synaxis and the Myrrh, as a perfecting knowledge and science of the works of God, through which the unifying elevation and most blessed communion towards the Godhead is reverently perfected. But now let us next examine the sacerdotal order, which is divided into a purifying, and illuminating, and perfecting discipline. This, then, is the sacred Law of the Deity—that, through the first, the second are conducted to its most Divine Light. Do we not see the material substances of the elements, first approaching, by preference, things which are more congenial to themselves, and through these diffusing their own energy to other things. Naturally, then, the head and foundation of all good order, invisible and visible, causes the Divinely wrought rays to approach first the more Divine Beings, and through them, as being more transparent minds, and more properly adapted for reception and transmission of Light, transmits his light and manifestations to those who are subordinate, in proportions suitable to them.

It is, then, the function of these, the first contemplators, to exhibit ungrudgingly to the next order, in proportion to their capacity, the Divine visions reverently gazed upon by themselves, and to reveal the things relating to the Hierarchy (since they have been abundantly instructed with a complete science in all matters

¹ Plato, *Phéd.* i. 52.

² Plato, *Phéd.* i. 54.

relating to their own Hierarchy, and have received the effectual power of instruction), and to impart sacred gifts according to capacity of reception, since they possess Hierarchical completeness in the highest degree of knowledge and attainment. The Divine order of the Hierarchs, then, is the first of the contemplative orders; but it is, at the same time, highest and lowest; inasmuch as every order of our Hierarchy is summed up and fulfilled in it. For as we see every Hierarchy is terminated in Jesus, thus we see each order summed up in its own godly Hierarchy. Now the power of the Hierarchical order permeates the whole sacred body, and through every one of the sacred Orders performs the mysteries of its proper Hierarchy. But pre-eminently to this, the Divine institution assigned the more Divine Services of the Sanctuary, rather than to the other Orders, for his special work. For these are the perfecting images of the supremely Divine Power, completing all the most Divine symbols and all the sacred orders. For though some of the august symbols are consecrated by the Priests, yet never will the Priest effect the Divine Birth without the most Divine Myrrh; nor will he consecrate the mysteries of the Divine Communion, unless the symbols of Communion have been placed upon the most Divine Altar. But neither will he be Priest himself, unless he has been designated to this by the Hierarchical consecrations. Hence the Divine Institution has uniquely assigned the dedication of the Hierarchical orders, and the consecration of the Divine Myrrh, and the complete consecration of the Altar, to the perfecting powers of the inspired Hierarchs. It is, then, the Hierarchical Order which is furnished with the perfecting faculty, which pre-eminently completes the perfecting functions of the Hierarchy, and reveals lucidly the sciences of the holy mysteries, and teaches their proportions, and sacred conditions and powers. The illuminated order of the Priests, however, conducts those who are being initiated, under the direction of the inspired Hierarchy, to the Divine visions of the initiations, and in co-operation with this, reverently ministers its own religious ministrations. Whatever this order may do, in shewing the works of God, through the most holy symbols, and in perfecting those who draw nigh, in the Divine contemplations, and in the participation in the hallowed initiations, it yet sends to the Hierarchy those who crave the exact knowledge of the religious service which they have witnessed. The Order of the Leitourgoi, that which purifies, whose function it is to separate the unfit, previous to the Divine Service of the Priests, purifies those who are drawing nigh, making them entirely pure from opposing fashions, and suitable for the sanctifying vision and communion. For which reason, during the service of Regeneration, the Leitourgoi strip him who draws nigh of his old clothing, and even take off his sandals, and make him stand

towards the west for renunciation. And again, they lead him back to the east (for they are of the purifying order and function), commanding those who approach to entirely cast away the coverings of their former life; and, showing the darkness of their former conduct, and teaching those who have said farewell to darkness, to transfer their allegiance to the Light. The Order of the Leitourgoi, then, is for purification, leading those who have been purified to the bright services of the Priests, both purifying and bringing to the Birth the uninitiated, by the purifying illuminations and teachings of the oracles, and further, sending away from the Priests the unholy, without respect of persons. Wherefore the Hierarchical institution places them over the holy gates, suggesting that the approach of those who come to holy things must be with complete purification, and conducting the approach to their reverent vision and communion, through the purifying functions, and admitting them through these without spot.

We have shewn, then, that the order of the Hierarchs is perfecting and completing—that of the Priests illuminating and conducting to the light—that of the Leitourgoi purifying and discriminating; that is to say, the Hierarchical order is appointed not only to perfect but at the same time to enlighten and to purify. The rank of the Priests has within itself, along with the illuminating, the purifying science. For the inferior cannot step over to the superior functions, and in addition to this it is not permitted for them to undertake such quackery as that. But the more Divine Orders, in conjunction with their own, possess also the sacred science of the subordinate orders. Nevertheless, since the sacerdotal orders are images of Divine Energies, they are arranged in Hierarchical distinctions, shewing in themselves the regulated illuminations into the first and middle and last sacred energies and orders of the well regulated and unconfused order of the Divine Energies; manifesting, as I have said, in themselves the well ordered and unconfused character of the Divine Energies. For since the supreme Deity first cleanses the Minds which He may enter, then enlightens, and when enlightened, perfects them to a Godlike perfection; naturally the Hierarchical image of the Divine divides itself into well defined orders and functions, shewing clearly the Divine Energies firmly established without confusion in most hallowed and unmixed ranks. Now, since we have spoken as permitted to us, of the sacerdotal orders and completeness, their powers and energies, let us now contemplate their most holy consecrations as well as we can.

II.—*Mystery of sacerdotal consecrations.*

The Hierarchy, being led to the Hierarchical consecration after he has bent both his ¹ knees before the Altar, has upon his head

¹ ἀμφω τὰ πόδε.

the God-transmitted oracles, and the Hierarch's right hand, and in this manner is consecrated¹ by the Hierarch who consecrates him with all holy invocations. The Priest, after he has bent both his knees before the Divine Altar, has the Hierarch's right hand upon his head, and in this manner is dedicated² by the Hierarch ordaining him with hallowing invocations. But the Leitourgos, after he has bent the one of two knees before the Divine Altar, has upon his head the right hand of the Hierarch who ordains him, being ordained³ by him with the consecrating invocations used in the ordination of the Leitourgoi. Upon each of them the cruciform seal⁴ of the ordaining Hierarch is impressed, and at each ordination the sacred proclamation of name takes place, and the concluding salutation, since every sacerdotal person present, and the Hierarch who ordained, salute him who has been consecrated to any of the aforementioned Hierarchical orders.

III.—*Contemplation.*

These things, then, are common to the Hierarch, and to the Priests, and to the Leitourgoi—the conducting to the Divine Altar and kneeling—the imposition of the Hierarch's right hand—the cruciform seal—the announcement of name—the completing salutation.

But the special and select rite for the Hierarchs is the placing of the oracles upon the head, since the subordinate orders have not this—but for the Priests the bending of both knees, since the consecration of the Leitourgoi has not this—for the Leitourgoi, as has been said, bend the *one* of two knees only. The conducting and kneeling before the Divine Altar suggests to those who are being sacerdotally consecrated that their own life is entirely placed under God as Author of consecration, and that their whole intellectual self approaches to Him all pure and hallowed, and that it is of one likeness; and, as far as possible, meet for the Divine and most hallowed Victim⁵ and Altar, which purifies through religious ministrations the Godlike mind. But the imposition of the Hierarch's right hand signifies at once the protection of the primal consecrator, by whom, as holy children, they are cherished paternally, whilst it gives them the sacerdotal habit and function, and drives away their opposing powers. But it teaches at the same time also that all sacerdotal operations are effectual in so far as those who have been consecrated are acting under God, and have Him as Leader in every respect of their own life. But the signing with the sign of the Cross manifests the inaction of all the impulses of the flesh, and the life of Divine imitation which looks unflinchingly to the life of Jesus, at once

¹ ἀποτελειούνται. ² ἁγιάζεται. ³ τελειύμενος. ⁴ σφραγίς. ⁵ Christ.

manly and most godly, Who has come even to the Cross and death, with a supremely Divine sinlessness, and stamps those who thus live as of the same likeness by the cruciform image of his own sinlessness.

But the Hierarch calls aloud the name of the consecrations and of the consecrated. The mysterious meaning of which is, that the holy consecrator, beloved of God, makes manifest the supremely Divine choice—not of his own accord, or by his own favour, leading those who are consecrated to the sacerdotal consecration, but as being moved by God to all the Hierarchical dedications. Thus Moses, the consecrator under the Law, does not lead Aaron, his brother, to sacerdotal consecration, though thinking him both beloved of God and hallowed, until moved by God to this, in submission to God as chief consecrator, he completed by Hierarchical rites the sacerdotal consecration.¹ But our supremely Divine and first consecrator (for Jesus, out of His great love to man, became even this), did “not glorify Himself,” as the Scriptures say, but He Who said to Him, “Thou² art Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Wherefore also He Himself, when leading the disciples to sacerdotal consecration, although, being as God, chief consecrator, nevertheless refers the Hierarchical completion of the work of consecration to His most holy Father, and the supremely Divine Spirit, by admonishing the disciples not to depart from Jerusalem, but to “await the promise of the Father, which ye heard of me, that ye shall be baptized in the Holy Ghost.”³ And indeed, the coryphæus of the disciples himself, with the ten, of the same rank and Hierarchy with himself, when he proceeded to the sacerdotal completion of the number of the disciples to twelve, reverently left the selection to the Supreme Deity, saying, “Shew⁴ whom Thou hast chosen,” and received him, who was Divinely designated by the Divine choice, into the number of the twelve Hierarchs. Now concerning the Divine lot, which fell as a Divine intimation upon Matthias, others have expressed another view, not correctly, as I think, but I will express my own sentiment. For it seems to me that the Scriptures name “lot” as a certain gift from God, pointing out to that Hierarchical Choir, him who was designed by the Divine election. More particularly because the Divine Hierarch must not perform the sacerdotal consecration of his own motion; but, as subject to God, moving him to accomplish these consecrations, with religious rites and heavenly intimations.

Now the salutation at the end of the consecration has a religious significance. For all the members of the sacerdotal orders present, as well as the Hierarch who has consecrated them, salute

¹ Ex. xxix. 4.

² Ps. cx. 4.

³ Acts i. 4, 5.

⁴ Acts i. 24.

the men ordained. For when by sacerdotal habits and dispositions, and by Divine call and dedication, a religious mind has attained to sacerdotal consecration, he is dearly loved by the most holy orders of the same rank ; elevated, as he is, to a most God-like comeliness ; loving the minds similar to himself, and religiously loved by them in return. Hence it is that the mutual sacerdotal salutation is performed, proclaiming the religious communion of minds of like character, and their loving benignity towards each other, which keeps, by sacerdotal training, their most Godlike comeliness in complete perfection.

These things, as I said, are common to the whole sacerdotal consecration. The Hierarchy, however, as a distinctive mark, has the oracles most reverently placed upon his head. For since the perfecting function and science of the whole Priesthood is conferred upon the inspired Hierarchy by the supremely Divine and perfecting goodness, naturally the Divinely transmitted oracles are placed upon the heads of the Hierarchy—oracles which explain completely and scientifically all theology—work of God, manifestation of God, sacred word, sacred work : in one word, all the Divine and sacred works and words bequeathed to our Hierarchy by the beneficent Deity. Since the Godlike Hierarchy, having partaken entirely of the whole Hierarchical power, will not only be illuminated in the true and God-transmitted science of all the holy words and works committed to the Hierarchy, but will also transmit them to others by Hierarchical teaching, and will perfect in most Divine knowledge and the highest instruction, through his power as Hierarchy, all the most perfecting functions of the whole Priesthood. But the distinctive feature of the ordination of Priests, as contrasted with the ordination of the *Leitourgoi*, is the bending of the two knees, as that order bends only the one, and is consecrated by this religious symbol. The bending denotes the submissive approach of the man who draws nigh, who places under God that which is religiously presented. But since, as we have often said, the three orders of the consecrators, through the three most holy initiations and functions, preside over the three orders of the initiated, and accomplish or religiously perform their saving approach under the Divine yoke, naturally the order of Deacons, as being merely puritive, religiously performs the *one* approach of those who are being purified, placing it under the Divine Altar, as though the minds who are being purified were being transcendently hallowed in himself. But the Priests bend both their knees, because those who are religiously brought nigh by them are not only being purified, but have been religiously perfected by their most luminous instructions into a contemplative habit and power. But the Hierarchy, bending both his knees, has upon his head the God-transmitted oracles, as leading, through his office of Hierarchy, those who have been purified by the

Leitourgoi, and enlightened by the Priests, to the exact knowledge of the things contemplated by them, in proportion to their capacities; and through this knowledge perfecting those who are brought nigh, into the most complete holiness of which they are capable.

CAPUT VI.

Concerning the Ranks of the Initiated.

These, then, are the sacerdotal ranks and vocations, their powers, and functions, and consecrations. We must next explain the Triad of the ranks initiated, which are subordinate to them. We affirm then that the multitudes who are dismissed from the Divine Services and Consecrations, which we have mentioned, are Orders undergoing a course of purification; for one is being moulded and fashioned to a living existence, by the Deacons through the oracles which bring to birth; another is already called back to the holy life, from which it had departed, by the wholesome discipline of the good oracles; another, as being already terrorized through want of manliness by opposing fears, is being fortified by the strengthening oracles; another, as being led back from evil counsels to holy efforts; and another as having been led back, indeed, but not yet having a chaste fixedness in more God-like habits and tranquillity. For these are the Orders under purification, by the nursing and purifying powers of the Leitourgoi. These, the Leitourgoi perfect, by their sacred powers, for the purpose of their being brought, after their complete cleansing, to the contemplation and participation in the most luminous Divine Services. The middle is the contemplative order, which participates in certain Divine Offices in all purity, according to its capacity, and is assigned to the Priests for its enlightenment. For it is evident, in my opinion, that this order, after having been cleansed from all unholy impurity, and when it has acquired the immovable steadfastness of its own mind in perfect purity, is led back, through priestly functions, to the habit and power of contemplation, and communicates in the most Divine symbols, filled with all holy joy in their contemplations and communions, mounting to the Divine love of their highest knowledge, through their instructions and functions, as far as their capacity admits. This, I say, is the order of the holy people, which, as having passed through complete purification, is deemed worthy, as far as permissible, both of the reverent vision, and participation of the most luminous Sacraments. But, the order higher than all the initiated is the sacred order of the Monks, which, as regards an entirely purified purification, with all its power and completely

purified energies, has acquired a spiritual contemplation and participation in every Divine Service, which it is permissible for it to contemplate; and is being conducted by the most perfecting functions of the Hierarchs, and taught by their inspired illuminations and hierarchical traditions respecting the Divine Services of the holy Sacraments, viewed by them, according to their capacity, and elevated by their sacred science, to the most perfecting perfection of which they are capable. Hence our Divine leaders have deemed them worthy of sacred appellations. Some, indeed, call them "Therapeutæ," but others "Monks," from their pure service and fervid devotion to the true God; and from the undivided and unified life, as making them one, by folding together their divided qualities into a God-like isolation, and God-loving perfection. Wherefore the Divine institution accorded them a perfecting grace, and deemed them worthy of a certain invocation for their consecration—not hierarchical—for that is confined to the sacerdotal orders alone, but hallowing,¹ as being hallowed, by the pious Priests, by the hierarchical consecration in the second degree.

II.—MYSTERION.

Mystery of Monastic Consecration.

The Priest stands before the Divine Altar and religiously pronounces the invocation for Monks. The Monk stands behind the Priest, neither bends both knees, nor one of them, nor has upon his head the Divinely transmitted oracles; but only stands near the Priest, whilst he pronounces upon him the mystical Benediction. When the Priest has finished this, he approaches the man being consecrated, and asks him first, if he bids farewell to all distractions—not of life only, but also of imagination. Then he sets before him the most perfect life, and warns him that it is his bounden duty to surpass the ordinary life. When the initiated has promised steadfastly all these things, and the Priest has signed him with the sign of the Cross, he crops his hair. After an invocation to the threefold subsistence of the Divine Beatitude, he strips off all his clothing, and clothes him anew, and with all the holy men present salutes him, and administers to him the supremely Divine Mysteries.

III.—Contemplation.

The fact that he bends neither knee, nor has upon his head the Divinely transmitted oracles, but stands by the Priest, whilst

¹ *ιερούργησις*.

pronouncing the benediction for Monks, signifies that the monastic order is not for the leading of others, but stands by itself, in an isolated and holy state, after the sacerdotal orders, and is readily conducted by them as a follower to the Divine science of sacred things, according to its capacity. The renunciation of the divided, not only lives, but even imaginations, shews the most perfect love of wisdom in the Monks, which exercises itself in the exact knowledge of the unifying commandments. For it is not, as I said, of the middle order of those who are initiated, but of the higher than all. Therefore many of the things which are done without reproach by the middle order, are forbidden in every way to the unified Monks—inasmuch as they are under obligation to be unified to the One, and to be collected to a sacred isolation, and to be transformed to the sacerdotal life, as far as permissible, as possessing an affinity to it in many things, and as being nearer to it, as compared with the rest of the ranks of the initiated. But the sealing with the sign of the Cross, as we have already said, denotes the inaction of almost all the desires of the flesh. The cropping of the hair shews the pure and unpretentious life, which does not beautify the darkness within the mind by overlarding it with smeared pretence, but shews it leads by itself to the highest likeness of God, not by human attractions, but by single and monastic. The casting aside of the former clothing, and taking another, seems to show a transition from a middle sort of religious life to the more perfect one; just as, in the holy Birth from God, the exchange of the clothing denoted the elevation of a purified life to a contemplative and enlightened condition. But if even now the Priest and all the religious present salute him who has been consecrated, bear in mind the holy fellowship of those who carry the likeness of God, who congratulate each other in a Divine rejoicing. But, as consummation of all, the Priest invites him who has been consecrated to the supremely Divine Communion, shewing through religious ordinance that the consecrated, if he would really attain to the monastic and uniform elevation, he will not merely be contemplative of the sacred mysteries in their essential nature, nor will he come to the communion of the most holy symbols, after the fashion of the middle rank; but with a Divine knowledge of the mysteries received by himself, he will come in a manner different from that of the holy people to the reception of the supremely Divine Communion. Wherefore, the Communion of the most holy Eucharist is also given to the sacerdotal¹ Orders, in their dedication to the Priesthood at the conclusion of their most sacred consecrations by the Hierarch who has consecrated them; not only because the reception of the supremely

¹ See Ordinal.

Divine Mysteries is the consummation of each Hierarchical reception, but because all the sacred Orders, in accordance with their capacity, partake of the common and most godly gift, according to their own elevation and perfection in deification. We conclude, then, that the holy initiations are, purification, and illumination, and consecration. The *Leitourgoi* are a purifying Order, the Priests an illuminating, and the Godlike Hierarchs a perfecting Order. The Order which is excluded from the sacred contemplation and communion, as being already under course of purification, is an Order being purified. But the Order of the unified Monks is a purified Order. For thus our Hierarchy, reverently arranged in ranks fixed by God, is like the Heavenly Hierarchies, preserving, so far as man can do, its Godlike characteristics and Divine imitation.

But you will say that the Orders undergoing purification utterly fall short of the Heavenly Hierarchies (for it is neither permissible nor true to say that any celestial Order is impure), and I would altogether affirm myself that they are entirely without blemish, and possess a purity above this world, unless I had completely fallen away from a religious mind. For if any of them should have become captive to evil, and have fallen from the heavenly, undefiled harmony of the celestial minds, he would be brought to the gloomy fall of the rebellious multitudes. But one may reverently say, with regard to the Heavenly Hierarchy, that the revelation from God, of things hitherto unknown, is a purification to the subordinate Beings, leading them to a more perfect science of the God-derived communications, purifying them from the ignorance of those things of which they had not hitherto the exact knowledge, conducted as they are, through the first and more Divine Beings, to the higher and more luminous splendours of the visions of God. Thus there are ranks being illuminated, and being initiated and purified, and purifying and illuminating, and perfecting, after the example of the Heavenly Hierarchy; as though the highest and more Divine minds were purifying the subordinate, holy, and reverent ranks from all ignorance (in ranks and proportions of the Heavenly Hierarchies), but fitting them with the most Divine illuminations and perfections, in the most pure science of the supremely Divine conceptions. For we have already said, and the oracles Divinely demonstrate that all the heavenly Orders are not alike, in the sacred knowledge of all the illuminations that come from God. But, from God immediately, the first are illuminated; then through these, but again from God, the subordinate, in proportion to their powers, are illuminated with the most luminous glories of the Divine rays.

CAPUT VII.

Concerning the Rites celebrated over those who have fallen asleep.

Having defined these things, I think it necessary to describe the religious rites celebrated over those who have fallen asleep. For there is a difference here also between the sacred and the profane. For, as the form of life is different in each, so also, when approaching death, they differ. Those who have had a religious life, when they look to the unfailing promises of the Deity, inasmuch as they have observed their proof, in the resurrection proclaimed by it, come to the goal of death, with a firm and unfailing hope, in godly rejoicing, as at the conclusion of holy contests—knowing that their rewards will be in a perfect and endless life and salvation, through their future entire resurrection.¹ For the holy souls, which may possibly fall, during this present life, to a change for the worse, in the regeneration will have the most Godlike transition to an unchangeable² condition. Now, the pure bodies of the holy souls, which are enrolled together as yoke-fellows and companions, and fellow-combatants within their Divine struggles, in the unchanged steadfastness of their souls throughout the divine life, will jointly receive their own resurrection.³ For, having been made one with the holy souls to which they were united in this present life, as having become members⁴ of Christ, they will receive the Godlike and imperishable immortality, and a blessed repose.⁵ In this respect, then, the sleep of the just is in comfort and unshaken hope as it draws nigh the goal of the Divine contests.⁶ Now, amongst the profane, some⁷ illogically think to go to a non-existence; others,⁸ that the yoke binding the body to its own proper soul will be severed once for all, not deeming it suitable to them in a Divine life and blessed repose, inasmuch as they have not been sufficiently instructed in the knowledge of Divine things, which teaches that our most Godlike life in Christ has already begun.⁹ But others¹⁰ assign to souls unions with other bodies, committing, as I suppose, this injustice to them, that, after they have laboured together with the godly souls, they unjustly deprive them, when they have reached the goal of the Divine course, of their righteous retribution. But others,¹¹ I do not know how they have strayed to conceptions of such earthly tendency, say, that the most holy and blessed inheritance, promised to the devout, is similar to our life in this world, and unlawfully reject, for those who are equal to the Angels, nourishment appropriate to another kind of life. But no one would ever

¹ Soul first—body afterwards. ² 1 John iii. 2. ³ 1 Cor. xv. 52. ⁴ 1 Cor. vi. 15.

⁵ Heb. iv. 11. ⁶ 2 Tim. iv. 6-8. ⁷ Plato, Phed. i. 54. ⁸ Phed. i. 62-3.

⁹ Col. iii. 3-4. ¹⁰ Phed. i. 64. ¹¹ Matt. xxii. 28.

forsake most reverent men, for such vagaries as these. But knowing that their whole selves will receive the Christlike inheritance, when they have come to the goal of this present life, they see more clearly their road to incorruption as already become nearer, and praise the gifts of the supreme Godhead and are filled with a Divine satisfaction, no longer fearing the fall to a worse condition, but well knowing that they will hold firmly and everlastingly the good things already acquired. But those who are full of blemishes, full of stains, even though they have attained to some instruction, yet, of their own accord, have to their own destruction rejected this from their mind, and have rashly followed destructive lusts, when they have approached the end of their life here, the Divine regulation of the oracles will no longer appear to them as before, a subject of scorn,¹ but when they have looked with other eyes upon the pleasures of their passions destroyed, and have pronounced blessed the holy life from which they thoughtlessly had fallen away, they are, piteously and against their will, separated from this present life, conducted to no blessed hope, in consequence of their shameful life.² But, whilst none of these attain the rest of holy men, the holy man himself, who comes to the end of his struggles, is filled with a holy consolation, and with much satisfaction draws nigh to the path of the holy regeneration. The familiar friends of him who has fallen asleep, as befits their Divine familiarity and fellowship, pronounce him blessed, whoever he is, as approaching, in answer to his prayers, the end crowned with victory. They send up odes of thanksgiving to the Author of victory, praying also that they themselves may come to the same inheritance. Then they take him and bring him to the Hierarch, as to a bequest of holy crowns. He right gladly receives him, and celebrates the rites fixed by reverend men, to be celebrated over those who have piously fallen asleep.

II.—*Mysterion*³ over those who have religiously fallen asleep.

The Divine Hierarch collects the reverend Choir. If the person who has fallen asleep were of the sacerdotal rank, he places him low before the Holy Altar, and offers the prayer and thanksgiving to God. But if he belonged to the rank of the chaste Monks, he places him near the hallowed sanctuary, before the sacerdotal entrance. Then the Hierarch finishes the prayer of thanksgiving to God. Next, the *Leitourgoi* read the faithful promises concerning our resurrection, which are contained in the Divine Lections, and chant the odes of the same teaching and power, with the Lections contained in the Psalter.⁴ Then the

¹ Republic, lib. i., p. 9. Cousin, Paris, 1833. ² Ps. cxii. 10.

³ Instructive Function.

⁴ See Burial Office.

first Deacon dismisses the catechumens, and calls aloud the names of the holy people who have already fallen asleep, amongst whom he deems the man who has just terminated his life worthy of registration, as being of the same rank, and urges all to seek the blessed consummation in Christ. Then the Divine Hierarch advances, and offers a most holy prayer over him, and after the prayer he salutes the defunct, and after him all who are present. When all have saluted, the Hierarch pours the oil upon the defunct, and when he has offered the prayer for all, he places the body in a worthy grave, with other holy bodies of the same rank.

III.—*Contemplation.*

Now, if the profane should see or hear that these rites were celebrated by us, they will, I suppose, split with laughter, and compassionate us for our folly. But we need not wonder at this. For, as the Scripture saith, "If they will not believe, neither shall they understand."¹ Now, let us who have contemplated the spiritual meaning of the rites celebrated, say—Whilst Jesus leads us to the light, that not without reason does the Hierarch conduct to, and place the defunct in the place with those of the same rank. For it shows spiritually that, in the regeneration, all will be in that inheritance for which they have chosen their own life here. For example, if anyone here had a Godlike and most holy life (so far as the imitation of God is attainable by man), he will be throughout the age to come in a divine and blessed lot. But if he lead a life inferior to the divine likeness in its perfection, but, nevertheless, a holy life, even this man will receive the holy retributions of the same kind. The Hierarch, having given thanks for this Divine righteousness, offers a sacred prayer, and celebrates the worshipful Deity, as subjugating the unjust and tyrannical power against us all, but conducting us to our own most just judgments.

Now, the Chants and Readings of the Divine promises are explanatory of the most blessed inheritances into which those who have attained a Divine perfection shall be appointed. But the inheritances which await the defunct, stimulate those who are still living to a similar perfection. But observe, that not all classes of those who are under purification are dismissed, but only the catechumens are put out of the holy place, for this class is entirely uninstructed in every holy initiation, and is not permitted to view any of the religious celebrations, great or small, inasmuch as they have not received the faculty of contemplating the holy mysteries, through the Birth from God, which is Source and gift of light. But the other classes of those who are being purified have already been under instruction in sacred tradition; but, as they have

¹ Wisdom iii. 9.

foolishly returned to an evil course (it being necessary to complete their training to better things), they are reasonably dismissed from Divine visions and communions, even under symbols, for they would be injured, as partaking of them unholily, and would come to a greater contempt of the Divine Mysteries and themselves. But it is not unbecoming that they should be present at the ceremonies now celebrated, as they are clearly taught and see the uncertainty of death amongst us, and the glories of the saints chanted from the unfailing oracles, and that the sufferings reserved to the unholy like themselves will be without end. For it will perhaps be profitable for them to see him who has religiously finished his course reverently proclaimed by the public declaration of the *Leitourgoi*, as being numbered amongst the saints for ever.¹ And, perchance, they also will come to the like condition, and will learn, from the instruction of the Deacons, that the consummation in Christ is blessed indeed. Then the Hierarch, advancing, offers a sacred prayer over the defunct. After the prayer, both the Hierarch himself salutes him, and next, all who are present. As for the prayer, it beseeches the supremely Divine Goodness to remit to the defunct all the failings committed through human infirmity, and to place him in the light² and land of the living³; in the bosom of Abraham,⁴ and Isaac, and Jacob; in a place where grief and sorrow and sighing are no more. It is evident, then, as I think, that these, the rewards of the holy, are most blessed. For what can be compared to an immortality, entirely without grief, and luminous with light. Especially, if all the promises which pass man's understanding, and which are signified to us by signs adapted to our capacity, fall short in their description of the actual truth. For we must remember that that saying is true, that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things God hath prepared for them that love⁵ him." "Bosoms" of the blessed Patriarchs, and of the other holy men are in my judgment the most divine and blessed inheritance which awaits all godly men, in that consummation⁶ which grows not old, and is full of blessedness.

But you may, perhaps, say that these things are correctly affirmed by us, but you want to know for what reason the Hierarch beseeches the supremely Divine Goodness, asking remission of the faults committed by the defunct, and his admission into the brightest inheritance amongst godly men of the same rank. For, if everyone shall receive, by judgment of God, equivalents for what he has done in the present life, whether it be good or otherwise, and the defunct has finished his activity within this present life, how, from any prayer offered by the

¹ Luke i. 70.² Ps. lvi. 13.³ Ps. cxvi. 9.⁴ Luke xvi. 22.⁵ 1 Cor. ii. 9.⁶ Matt. vi. 10.

Hierarch, will he be transferred to another lot, besides that suitable to him, as an equivalent for his life here. Now, well do I know, as following the Oracles, that each one will have the inheritance which is like for like, for the Lord, he says, hath concluded respecting him, and each one "shall receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or whether it be bad."¹ Yea, the sure tradition of the Oracles teaches us that the prayers, even of the just, avail only for those who are worthy of pious prayers during this present life, much less² after death. Did the prayers of Samuel procure anything for Saul?³ or did the intercession of the Prophet⁴ bring any advantage to the people of Israel? For it is as if, when the sun is shedding its own splendour upon eyes that are sound, anyone should seek to enjoy the meridian splendour, whilst obliterating his own powers of vision. Thus does he cling to impossible and extravagant expectations, who, whilst beseeching the prayers of holy men, diminishes the holy efforts essential to the same, and departs from the most luminous and beneficent commandments through heedlessness of the Divine gifts.

Nevertheless, I affirm, on the authority of the oracles, that the prayers of the just⁵ are in every respect profitable in this life, after the following fashion. If anyone, longing for holy gifts and having a religious disposition for their reception, approaches some one of the pious men, as being conscious of his own insufficiency, and should prevail upon him to become his fellow-helper, and fellow-suppliant, he will be benefitted in every respect, in this way, with a benefit superior to all. For he will attain the most Divine gifts he prays for, since the supremely Divine Goodness assists him, as well as his pious self-knowledge, and his reverence for devout men, and his craving for the religious gifts requested, and his brotherly and Godlike disposition. For this has been firmly fixed by the supremely Divine decrees—that the Divine gifts are given in an order most befitting God to those who are meet to receive them, through those who are meet to distribute them.

If any one then should despise this sacred regulation, and betake himself to a wretched self-conceit, and should deem himself sufficient for the Divine Converse, and look down upon pious men, and if he should further request requests unworthy of God, and not holy, and if he should have a disposition which is not concordant with the Divine, and similar to himself, he will fail in his inexperienced request through his own fault. Now, with reference to the prayer mentioned, which the Hierarch prays over

¹ 2 Cor. v. 10.² μήτιγε μετα θάνατον.³ 1 Sam. xvi. 1.⁴ Jer. vii. 16.⁵ James v. 16.

the defunct, we think it necessary to mention the tradition which has come to us from our inspired leaders. The Divine Hierarchy, as the oracles say, is the interpreter of the supremely divine judgments. For he is messenger¹ of the Lord God Omnipotent. He has learned then, from the God-transmitted oracles, that to those who have passed their life in piety, the most bright and divine² life is recompensed according to their deserts, by the most just measures, whilst the Divine Love towards man overlooks, through its goodness, the blemishes which have come to them, through human infirmity (since no one, as the oracles say, is pure and without spot).

Now, the Hierarchy knew these things to have been promised by the sure oracles. He asks, then, that these things may come to pass, and that the righteous returns may be given to those who have lived piously. At the same time, as being moulded as an image of goodness to the Divine imitation, he beseeches gifts for others as favours to himself. But, at the same time, he knows that the promises will be surely fulfilled, and manifests clearly to those present that the things asked by him, according to Divine law, will be entirely realized, for those who have been perfected in a Divine life. For the Hierarchy, the expounder of the supremely Divine Justice, would never seek things which are not most pleasing to the Most Supreme God, and which were not divinely promised to be given by Him. Wherefore, he does not offer these prayers over the unholy departed; not only because in this he would deviate from his office of interpreter, and would presumptuously arrogate, on his own authority, a function of the Hierarchy, without being moved by the Supreme Legislator, but, because also, he would fail to obtain his abominable request, and would, not unnaturally, hear respecting himself, from the Divine Oracle, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss."⁴ Therefore, the Divine Hierarchy beseeches things divinely promised, and dear to God, and which will, in every respect, be given, and demonstrates his own likeness to the good loving God, and declares, as the interpreter of God, the gifts which will be received by the devout. Thus, the Hierarchs have discriminating powers, as interpreters of the Divine Judgments. Not, as though the All-Wise Deity, to put it mildly, were slavishly following their irrational impulses, but, as though they, as interpreters of God, were deciding by the motion of the supremely judging Spirit, those who have already been judged by God according to their deserts. For receive, he says, the Holy Spirit, "whose⁵ sins ye may have remitted, they are remitted; whose ye may retain, they

¹ Malachi ii. 7.² 1 John v. 16.³ Job xiv. 4.⁴ James iv. 3.⁵ John xx. 22, 23.

are retained." And to him who was illuminated with the Divine revelations of the most Holy Father, the Oracles say, "Whatsoever thou shalt have bound upon the earth shall be bound in the heavens; and whatsoever thou shalt have loosed on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," inasmuch as He, and every Hierarch who is like Him, receives those who are dear to God, according to the revelations of the Father's judgments resting upon him, as announcing and interpreting the Divine Will, and rejects those who are without God. Further, as the Oracles affirm, He uttered that sacred and divine saying, not as self-moved,¹ nor as though flesh and blood had revealed it, but as one who had been spiritually taught Divine things by God. The inspired Hierarchs then, must so exercise their determinations and all their Hierarchical powers as the Godhead, the Supreme Initiator, may move them. As for the rest, they must so cling to the Hierarchs in their sacerdotal functions as men moved by God. "For he that despises you," He says, "despiseth Me."²

Let us now proceed to that which follows the prayer mentioned. When the Hierarch has finished this, he first salutes the defunct, and next, all who are present. For dear and honoured, to all Godlike men, is he who has been perfected in a Divine life. After the salutation the Hierarch pours the oil upon the defunct. But remember, that in course of the Birth from God, before the most Divine Baptism, the oil of Chrism, as a first participation of the holy symbol, is given to the neophyte, after the entire removal of the former clothing. But now, at the conclusion of all that is done, the oil is poured upon the defunct. The first anointing with the oil summons the initiated to the holy contests; but the pouring of the oil now shows the defunct to have struggled through those same contests, and to have been made perfect.

When the Hierarch has finished these things he places the body in an honourable chamber, with other bodies of holy men of the same rank. For if, in soul and body, the man has passed a life dear to God, there will be honoured with the devout soul also the body which contended with it throughout the devout struggles. Hence, the Divine justice gives to it, together with its own body, the reciprocal inheritances, as companions and participators in the devout or the contrary life. Wherefore, the Divine institution of sacred things bequeaths the supremely Divine participations to them both—to the soul, indeed, in a pure contemplation and in an exact knowledge of the rites celebrated; to the body, by sanctifying the whole man, as in a figure, with the most Divine Myrrh, and the most holy symbols of the Divine Communion, effecting his complete salvation, and announcing that his resurrec-

¹ Matt. xvi. 17.² Luke x. 16.

tion will be most complete by entire sanctification. Now, as regards the consecrating invocations, it is not permitted to explain them in writing, nor may we bring their mysterious meaning, nor the powers working in them from God, from their secrecy to publicity. But, as our sacred tradition holds, by learning these, through quiet instructions, and by being perfected to a more Godlike condition and elevation, through Divine love and holy duties, you will be borne by the most perfect illumination to the most exalted knowledge of them.

Now the fact that even children, not yet able to understand the Divine mysteries, should become recipients of the holy Birth from God, and of the most holy symbols of the supremely Divine Communion, seems, as you say, to the profane, a fit subject for reasonable laughter, upon the supposition that the Hierarchs teach Divine things to those not able to hear, and vainly transmit the sacred traditions to those who do not understand. And this is still more laughable—that others, on their behalf, repeat the abjurations and the sacred compacts. But your Hierarchical judgment must not be too hard upon those who are led astray, but you should persuasively, and for the purpose of leading them to the light, reply affectionately to the positions alleged by them. When you have brought forward this fact, in accordance with sacred rule, that not all Divine things are comprehended in our knowledge, but many of the things unknown by us have causes worthy of God, which, although unknown to us, are yet well known to the Orders above us. Many things also escape even the most exalted Beings, and are known distinctly by the All-Wise and Wisdom-Giving Deity. Further, also, concerning this, we affirm what our God-like instructors conveyed to us, what they had learned from the early¹ tradition. For they say, what is also a fact, that infants being brought up according to a Divine institution will attain a religious disposition exempt from all error, and inexperienced in an unholy life. When our Divine leaders came to this conclusion, it was determined to admit infants upon the following conditions, viz. :—that the parents of the child to be presented should transfer him to some one of the instructed, who is a faithful teacher of children in Divine things, so that the child should lead the rest of his life under his instruction, as under a godfather, and security for his religious safe-keeping. The Hierarch requires him who promised to bring up the child according to the religious life, to pronounce the renunciations and the religious confessions. Not, as they would jokingly say, as instructing one instead of another in Divine things. For he does not say this, “on behalf of this child, I make myself the renunciation and the sacred profession,”

¹*ἀρχαίως*. See Acts xv. 7, 21, 16; and Archbp. Trench. Yet even Dupin ignorantly alleged that word as proof Post-Apostolic. Nov. Bib., p. 106.

but that the child renounces and consents itself; *i.e.*, I promise to persuade the child, when he has come to a frame of mind capable of religious impressions, through my instructions in Divine things, to renounce entirely contrary things, and to promise and perform the Divine confessions. There is nothing absurd, then, in my judgment, if the child is brought up in a religious training, in his having a guide and religious surety, who implants in him a disposition for Divine things, and keeps him inexperienced in things contrary.

The Hierarch imparts to the child the sacred symbols in order that he may be nourished by them, and may not have any other life, besides that of always contemplating Divine things; and that, being made partaker of them, in a religious progress, he may have a religious disposition in these matters, and may be devoutly brought up by his Godlike surety. So great, my son, and so beautiful, are the uniform visions of our Hierarchy, which have been presented to my view. But from others, perhaps, of a more clear-sighted mind, these things have been viewed, not only more clearly, but also more divinely. And to you, as I fancy, more brilliant and divine beauties will shine forth, whilst you use the foregoing as stepping stones to a higher ray. Impart then, my friend, yourself also, to me, a more perfect illumination, and show to my eyes the more comely and uniform beauties that you may have been able to see, for I am confident that, by what has been said, I shall strike the sparks¹ of the Divine Fire which lie dormant in you.

THANKS BE TO GOD.

27th October, 1893.

JOHN PARKER.

¹ Bacon, Advancement of Learning, p. 2.

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Appendix.

BISHOPS OF PARIS.

1. Dionysius.
2. Mallo.
3. Massus.
4. Marcus.
5. Adventus.
6. Victorinus.

Gallia Christiana, Tom. vii., p. 4.

BISHOPS OF ARLES.

1. Trophimus.
2. Regulus.
3. Martianus.
4. Victor.
5. Maurianus.
6. Martinus.

Tom. i., p. 520.

NOTE 2.—*Thanksgiving before the consecration, translated from a Latin Version of the Liturgy of Dionysius the Areopagite.*

“Sacerdos inclinatus.” For truly the celebration of Thy benefits, O Lord, exceeds the powers of mind, expression, and thought; nor can any lip, or mind, or tongue worthily praise Thee. For by Thy word the heavens were made, and by the breath of Thy mouth all the supernal powers, all lights which are in the firmament—sun and moon, sea and dry land, and whatever is in them. Things without voice, by their silence—things articulate by their voice through speech and hymns perpetually praise Thee, because Thou art essentially good, and above praise, existing incomprehensibly in Thy essential nature. (Elevating his voice.) This sensible creation praises Thee, O Lord, as well as those intellectual Beings placed above our material sense. Heaven and earth glorify Thee. Sea and air proclaim Thee. The sun in its predestined course praises Thee. The moon in its regulated changes venerates Thee. The multitudes of Archangels and the hosts of Angels, and those Virtues, seated above the world and the power of our conceptions, send their benediction to Thy throne. The Splendours of exceeding and hidden light send forth their Sanctus to Thy glory. Principalities and Orders praise Thee with Jubilate Powers and lordships venerate Thee. Virtues, Thrones, and Seats inaccessible—bright images of eternal light—mirrors without flaw—holy beings and recipients of wisdom sublime—pre-eminently searchers after that will kept secret from all—these exalt Thee by clear movements of tones inimitable, and by voices worthy of rational creatures. Many-eyed Cherubin, most highly exalted, bless Thee. Seraphin, with their enfolded wings, and full of feathers, call Thee Holy—those same beings who cover their faces with their wings, and veil their feet with their wings, and flying around and clapping their wings one to another, in order that they may not be consumed by Thy devouring heat, sing sweet and

pure chants in a universal harmony, offering eternal glory to Thee, crying in a hymn worthy of God, and saying (Populus) "Holy, Holy, Holy."

(Priest bending low.) Holy art Thou, God the Father, Omnipotent Maker and Creator of every creature, invisible and visible and sensible. Holy art Thou, Only-Begotten Son—Power and Wisdom of the Father, Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Holy art Thou, God the Holy Spirit, Perfecter and Sanctifier of Saints. Holy and Indivisible Trinity, co-essential and of equal glory, Whose compassion to our race is abundantly poured forth, Thou art Holy and sanctifying all: Who hast not left this our race in exile from Paradise, when it had become entangled in every kind of sin, but hast been manifested to it by the Word, which endured extremest poverty before the world. That Nature the Word took, made in all things like unto it sin excepted, that He might make it prepared unto holiness, and disposed to this life-giving feast. (Raising his voice.) Who conceived, formed, and moulded by the Holy Spirit, both from the Virgin blood of the Virgin Mary, Holy Mother of God, and from the pure and most holy body of the same, was born indeed Man, as Author of life, and receiving the Godhead in the flesh (whilst the law and properties of Nature were preserved, but in a manner above Nature), was acknowledged as God in Spirit and Man in flesh. And in so¹ far as the Word was before the worlds began, from Thee, in a manner worthy of God, He was born, and by signs and miracles such as became the Maker of All, was proved to be such, since He has abundantly provided complete healing and perfect salvation for the whole human race. But at the end and completion of His own dispensation, for our sake, and previous to His own saving Cross, He took Bread into His own pure holy hands, and looked up to Thee, God the Father, giving thanks, He blessed, sanctified, and brake, and gave to His own disciples, the holy Apostles, saying, "Take and eat from this, and believe² that the same is My Body, which for you and for many is broken and given for expiation of faults, remission of sins, and eternal life."

N.B.—I give this as example from a Liturgy full of interest, and preserved in the East, as that of Dionysius, Bishop of Athens, Disciple of St. Paul.

THE END.

¹ In quantum erat Verbum ante Sæcula.

² Credite quod corpus meum est illud ipsum quod pro vobis. This is not found in Greek or Almandrine Liturgies, but only Syriac. Migne.



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2003









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